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## HISTORIETTES.

IN THE PRESS:

THE AYLMEERS;

A NOVEL.

*Three Volumes, Post 8vo.*

**HISTORIETTES,**  
**OR**  
**TALES**  
**OF**  
**C O N T I N E N T A L   L I F E.**

BY THE AUTHOR OF

**"THE ENGLISH IN ITALY."**

*Normandy*

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

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## INTRODUCTION.

“WHAT is a man to do, who has travelled over the whole of Europe *en poste*?” demanded a disconsolate voyager, who, somewhere this side of Kamschatka, wept, like another Alexander, that the earth contained no new realms to be conquered by his chariot-wheels. “Go over the same ground on foot. Each country, I promise you, will be new enough.” Such was the reply; and full it was both of sense and justice. The pleasure felt in enjoying travel by wholesale, if I may so say, and traversing empires with a courier’s speed, is, whatever the world may say, a very high pleasure, even independent of vanity: it is an ex-

citement, of four-horse-power, to say the least of it, so great, as to sink almost below consideration the minor and common pleasures of travelling. Impelled by it, the varied leagues of Italy, and the dreary wersts of Russia, pass our chariot to the right and left with almost equal delight to us, and the spirit of adventure that fills the breast of the wanderer over Tartarean snows in his sledge, compensates for his privations, and renders the sum of his enjoyment fully equal to that of him, who drives listlessly from city to city, and from inn to inn, in devotion by the luxuries and the clime of the genial South.

But as in love, war, wine, ambition, and all possible phases of excitement, so in travel, men soon lose that young and happy faculty of being easily and simply pleased. Locomotion, mere locomotion, loses its charms, and pleasures of a more stationary kind, even in moving, must be sought. Britons, well supplied as they take care to set forth with all the com-



forts of hard-ware, soft-ware, and nicknackery, are here sadly at a loss. They are famous marchers, or rather wheelers by the way-side, but know not how to pitch their tents for ever so short a season, or to be happy therein. Their exploring voyages for the most part resemble that of the dove from the ark—they find no dry ground for a resting-place, till they return to the little floating-ark of an isle, whence they set forth.

Once forced, however, to become a citizen of the world, none becomes more fully so than a Briton; and as none are more eager and greedy after the gross pleasure of galloping across a continent, than they are at first, so none, after some years of foreign life, become better adapted for enjoying travel in detail. The man of what nation will, so readily as an Englishman, fling himself alone among strangers, or isolate himself in solitary scenery? Who ever saw a single Frenchman, with all the love of that nation for the picturesque,

wending his way alone through the defiles of the Alps? The Germans, with all their enthusiasm, travel in hordes. This may be accounted for by the fact that in that frank and simple country, feeling, be it ever so marked, ever so wrought up, has no need of either secrecy or modesty. But in England, where the enthusiastic feeling of the German is united with that prevalence of ridicule and morbid dread of it, generally considered characteristic of French society, sentiment must necessarily be cherished, and enjoyed in solitude. This is the true reason, that in travel so many individuals of our nation contradict the national character, by throwing themselves amongst strangers, losing themselves in foreign life, and spending their days, staff in hand, along the mountain-paths, and in the cottages and chalets of Switzerland. It is a paradox, I have often heard foreigners wonder at, and wonder at moreover not only as a paradox, in being opposed to national character, but being con-

trary to received opinion, that an Englishman is always an Englishman, his tongue, his feelings, and even his least habits indefeasible.

There is truth, however, in both observations—in the vulgar one, and in its contradiction. At our first setting forth, we are all the insular, prejudiced, proud, shy, selfish-seeming beings, that the ridicule of continental envy can depict us. Nay, if we return immediately, we return little better. But let us tarry abroad. Let the novelty of mere travel wear off; let us be unconnected with home by family or profession, deprived of the hopes of any such connexion, even as I, who write, by having attained a certain age without having made such provisions, and scorning to turn back for them. To such a man, the wide world is the only home, for there he enjoys all the advantages of his freedom, and is not reminded, as every object in his native home, did he dwell there, would not fail to bring to his recollection, that his is a life *manqué*, wanting in fact—

or that he has let pass the streams of love, of ambition, of all the ways of worldly happiness, beyond recal, and that while his contemporaries are winning or have won the noblest prizes in the lottery of life, he sate down content with an anticipated blank. To such a man, his native land is a huge, staring, unanswerable, and never-dying reproach, far beyond my enduring at least; and here, therefore, in this foreign land, I have become most at home. Every thing, that should be strange, is familiar, and all that should be familiar, strange. If I hear but an English voice, it has to me the wildest, most outlandish sound, and jars upon my ear.

I am not a singular being, and therefore my egotism may be allowed, yon egoistic vowel being a numeral that stands for a whole species—we are simply the wandering and the disappointed. We are exiles, not romantic or pretentious ones, not favoured or exalted by any peculiar or dreadful visitation of Provi-

dence. Crossed in love, we may have been, in friendship must have been often, wronged no doubt somewhat, but not enough to make verse withal, with every propensity to complain bitterly of the world, at least when in the spleen, but in truth with little reason, for the neglect has been on our side ; would-be misanthropes, but in fact nothing more than hip-pish, indifferently gay, and seasonably unhappy—he, that would know more of one individual of the species, may accompany me upon my rambles. Though an Englishman, I have divested myself of all that pertaineth to one so born, except the core : my foregoing introduction I intended as an argumentative proof that such might be the case, but, like myself, it has proved garrulous and errant. In the mean time, take these pretensions as granted, and allow me to be your guide. My object is to amuse you with narrative, as oft as fit and worthy objects for such cross our path, and

in the default and during the intervals of such, to utter most unpremeditatedly the crotchets of a warm and somewhat whimsical fancy.

THE  
REGICIDE'S FAMILY.





THE  
REGICIDE'S FAMILY.

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CHAPTER I.

A VISIT to Motiers Travers and the Lake of Biemme, with a concomitant perusal of some of the later and egoistical productions of Rousseau, excited in me a more than usual desire for solitude and pedestrianism. Both were favourites of my fancy, until that period, indeed, more often meditated than put in practice; for the Continent had not then been very many months open to the incursions of Englishmen, and my own dear country, with its boors, its high roads, its landlords so very acute in their perceptions of rank and wealth, I had

ever found most agreeable to traverse with the greatest number of wheels and horses procurable. From Yverdun I set forth in obedience to the irresistible whim of the moment, visited the field of Grandson, the valley of the Orbe, and all the places around, famed either for association or the picturesque. The reader shall not be troubled with a description of these well-known scenes, in which neither interesting personage nor adventure crossed my path, or occurred to enhance the enjoyment of them. Indeed, it is to be doubted, if these *chefs d'œuvre* of Nature's arrangement or caprice are most productive of pleasurable sensations: their effect is too overpowering, too absorbing, too exclusive of that accompanying train of thought, which oft heightens the charm of less romantic spots far above that of places more famed and sought. "You cannot both eat your cake, and have it," saith the proverb; and so can you not enjoy aught in anticipation without diminishing the sum of final plea-

sure, and converting a portion of it into disappointment. This perhaps is the secret of the frequent failure of Nature's choicest scenes in producing their effect. Or perhaps it is, that chance, that queen of adventure, is jealous of shedding needless interest upon a spot so well supplied from sources foreign to her, and selects in preference for her freaks and incidents an insignificant by-road, or not o'er romantic vale, where she may introduce a way-farer like myself to some mysterious personage, or indulge his curiosity with the clue to some interesting story.

I have ever found that one of the best guides to scenic and sequestered beauty is a river. Having followed for some days the current of the Orbe, repaid for no small difficulties and fatigue by the splendid and ever varying points of view which it offered, I resolved to trace in a similar manner towards the north the course of the Doubs, especially as it would conduct me by a more novel path

than the high road, towards Bienne and Soleure, whither my steps were bent. Beautiful as was the deep valley of the Jura, through which the current ran, it certainly rivalled not the banks and sources of the Orbe; and my thoughts, as I journeyed on, were freer perhaps, and more buoyant on that very account. The mind gave its spirit to, not took its impressions from, the scene; my imagination when excited, seemed to lord it o'er the prospect, instead of being awed in mere and submissive admiration; whilst reverie might steal my perceptions from it, without meeting reproaches for being forgetful of surrounding beauty.

Such were the feelings with which I traced the course of the Doubs for several days, now traversing with it a dreary and elevated tableland, now descending the steep ravine, down which it roared, and compelled by the impracticability of accompanying its immediate current, to seek a distant way, aloft, from whence

I beheld the silvery line of spray that marked its descent, breaking through the dark-green foliage of the pines that overhung and at length concealed it. Farther on I succeeded in regaining its banks, of which, although that opposite was the craggy base of some young Alp of the Jura, the one which I traversed was a deep and luxuriant meadow shaded by young plantations, and tenanted by the tingling herd of a *vacherie*. White houses scattered at intervals, some pitched upon the ledge of a declivity, others upon the brink of the stream, with] the patches of cultivation that surrounded each, imparted that resemblance to Welsh scenery, which Simond has remarked.

Absorbed in contemplating and hoarding up the impressions here preserved, I wandered on, abstracting myself at moments from the objects round to pursue some butterfly of the brain, and recurring to the prospect as oft as a sufficient distance past presented it under a

new appearance. Twice or thrice in these glances did the figure of an old man meet my view, before it attracted my full attention. His being well clad was a circumstance not so unusual in these manufacturing and wealthy vales, as to promise superior rank or information. His occupation, however, which became evident upon nearer approach—he was herbalizing on the mountain-side—was such as to command instantly not only the respect, but the interest of a *rêveur*, of one just risen from the perusal of Jean Jaques. I drew near to him, whilst he, regardless of my approach, allowed me full leisure for scrutiny. He seemed of most diminutive form and stature, his insignificant person nevertheless surmounted by a large head and countenance, the eyes indeed lustreless, but the face itself beaming with placidity and benevolence—such a one as Marivaux has described as having an air *plus ancien que vieux*. His hair, which he chose not to cover, his hat being whimsically appended to

the button of his coat, was of silver gray, and parted o'er a brow and cheeks, notwithstanding his age, of juvenile contour. This gave him to me a Miltonic appearance, that not a little increased my interest.

I accosted him. He replied, as one to whom converse with a stranger was welcome : and I in a little time abandoned the Doubs for the more social company of the gray-haired unknown. He was at first somewhat too much of a botanist for me, and expatiated upon the gender, number, and person of a specimen of *Cerastium Aquaticum* which he had gathered, in that mortifying tone of communication, which supposes and takes quietly for granted, one's knowledge of a science, utterly unknown to one. I was at length obliged to confess the little interest I took in the culling of simples, professing myself at the same time a worshipper of Nature in the mass, rather than in her minute specimens.

"Your admiration, then," replied he, "is that merely of an amateur for an art, the produce and enjoyment of a leisure hour. Nature is my only companion, my sole study, and were I to confine my attention to its general appearance and effects, I should lack occupation often both for mind and body."

"That seems strange to me," quoth I; "can yon prospect be less interesting than this tiny flower?"

"To you, young man, far more so, who have a well of feeling springing in your breast, which you can pour forth upon its fair extent. But I, who am old and narrowed in my sympathies, as well as a frequent sojourner amongst these scenes, cannot afford, unless at rare-occurring intervals, such an outlay of sentiment, as scenic enjoyment demands. The mere sunshine is enough to cheer my listless dreams, and a greater object of interest than a flower would mar the even tenor of my pulse and thoughts."



Being a younger man then than now, I scarcely understood what a few years' progress in apathy has since rendered perfectly intelligible to me. I left the argument there.

"You are proceeding to Locle?" said my companion.

I answered in the affirmative.

"We may be companions so far," added he stretching forth his staff towards the village, the red roofs and tin-capped steeple of which were seen in the extremity of the valley, tinged with the ray of the declining sun.

We walked along for some time in silence, which in any other situation might to such new acquaintances have been embarrassing. But the lovely scene was excuse sufficient for abstraction; and both of us looked and listened to the brawling Doubs, and towards the picturesque banks which overhung it on the opposite side, if not with similar thoughts, at least with countenances similarly expressive.

"Those banks are France," observed I, inquiringly, "and these meads are Switzerland?"

"Even so," replied my companion.

"What a scene for an exile, to wander near and behold the limits of his country, yon soil that he must not tread, yon barrier that he dare not pass?"

"Are you an exile, Sir?" demanded the old man.

"At best but a voluntary one."

"It is pity that your isle is not blessed with revolutions, political convulsions, and all the sublime consequences of parties struggling for life as well as power; for exile seems to appear to Englishmen the very sublime of their sad and romantic pleasures. All that ye, insular pilgrims, seem to want of happiness, is a fair excuse for being unhappy."

I could not but smile at this unexpected sally.

"Now I *am* an exile, and from that land you contemplate," continued the old Frenchman;

“and yet neither bank nor stream inspire the sentiments which you would lend me as an imaginative being.”

“At first, however, you must have experienced such, though habit since has worn away the feeling.”

“There you are wrong. 'Tis one of those that habit and indulgence would increase. But I am a cosmopolite, and know no country; and what I lose thereby in romance and in your respect, I gain in quiet.”

“And has banishment filled you with no regrets?”

“A few—my evening's *sorbet*, and my journal—my sunny walk in the *Jardin des Plantes*, and my solitary chamber *au quatrième* overlooking the bustle of the Faubourg St. Antoine—an old friend's conversation too—my children, they may suffer, they have—but the young may bear their own sorrows.”

The conversation seemed to press upon his confidence, so that I discontinued it, and in a

few moments we entered the little street of Locle.

“Know you, if there is an inn in this village?” asked I of my companion.

“A wretched *auberge*, if there be one.”

“I must then find out the mansion of the *curé*.”

“That will not be difficult, for thither in fact am I at this moment bound.”

I accordingly followed his steps through the village, in which our appearance seemed to excite little attention. The genius of mechanical industry, more pressing, less curious and idle, than that of agriculture, presided there, and neither loom nor hammer rested to allow of scanning the traveller more closely. Man, the machine, laboured on as regularly and incessantly as the wheels which the stream of the Doubs was turning, and with no trifling roar.

We clambered up the declivous street. The church surmounted an eminence above the village, and beyond this, contiguous to his place

of worship, stood the comfortable and spacious mansion of the *curé*. He himself stood in his vine-crowned porch, and immediately greeted his brother elder with a cordial salutation. I too went not without my welcome; and we three sat down in the porch, overlooking Locle, the Doubs, and its beautiful valley, thus spending the first moments in contemplating the scene, while the evening's repast was brought forth and spread before us.

"Welcome to our valley, Monsieur La Versière," said the *curé*, "but you would have been more welcome, had you brought Mademoiselle Cornélie with you."

"I had no thoughts of wandering so far when I set forth this morning," replied La Versière, "but my favourite *chasse aux fleurs*, my botanising mind, led me on even to the brink of my Rubicon yonder, where, by the by, I met Monsieur," turning to me, "and gained from him a lecture upon my want of sentiment."

"'Tis a commodity that the youths of his country abound in, almost as much as in the superfluous wealth, that might dispense with it."

"That rather is its cause and food," observed La Versière.

"You may easily exaggerate our stock both of wealth and sentiment," observed I; "they overflow in a Swiss valley perhaps, while the sources are often dry enough with us at home."

"But you promised often to bring Mademoiselle Cornélie to see me. The ride would do her good. Our valley at least rivals yours. And the conversation, though but of an old *curé*, would enliven her."

"'Tis true, my reverend friend; and, what your delicacy forbears to urge, we should take advantage of the only house, the only society, to which we have admission."

"Nay, nay," said the old *curé*, "you are strangers in these parts."

"Strangers still more to our age and gene-

ration," rejoined La Versière; "so fortune has willed it."

"What else can we expect, if we commence by being strangers to the truth?"

La Versière smiled. And I, somewhat interested, though uncalled to join in a conversation not a little enigmatical to me, devoted my attention to the pastoral fare before me, viz. kid for viand, herbs of every kind, and white wine not of the sweetest. Grapes and *gruyère* terminated the repast.

"Ossian, however, is often with you," said M. La Versière.

"Yes, that son of thine would recompense for the churlishness of a whole family. And yet, I fear, even he is selfish in his visits. The rogue loves my library far better than he loves me. Except his stock of volumes be exhausted, I never see him."

"Perhaps you have been endeavouring to convert him," said La Versière with a smile, "if so, Ossian is proud."

“A sound reason that for his retaining his own opinion.”

“An efficacious and not a dishonourable one, when that opinion is scouted and persecuted.”

The *curé* passed his hand over his fine forehead, and smoothed with hard and trembling fingers his thin white locks. He seemed to have the subject, on which he was about to speak, at heart. He was, perhaps, too full of its importance, too agitated, to succeed, if aught it was that he wished to impress upon his tranquil companion: for feeling, though it be the strength of man, appears but weakness to the merely reasoning and the cold.

“I do not wish, that is, I do not seek, to win you to the truth, La Versière; you are over-old, overwise, and too much versed in the ways and wisdom of men, to listen even with patience to the arguments of a rustic and unworthy minister of a creed that you disown. But come, I will make a pact with you,—descend, thou from thy apathy and sneers, I will waive,



if possible, my faith and confidence in revelation—we will put ourselves altogether aside—and take into consideration the young and the rising generation, your children, La Versière.”—

“ I understand you.”

“ Will you send them forth into the world without a stay, without guide, without consolation,” continued the pastor, straight losing sight of his stipulation.

“ Nay, now I understand you not,” said La Versière.

“ I mean, that even calling in question the truth of the Great Truth, would it not be wise to arm young minds with a knowledge and conviction of its principles, ere they be sent forth to combat with the world and all its temptations to vice and to wrong?”

“ What arm them with a lie?”

“ Be decorous, or our pact vanishes. The greatest of your sophists never succeeded or even attempted to degrade Christianity lower than the rank of a probability.”

"Shall I teach it to my children then as a probability?"

"I fear, that were vain."

"I will not stoop to deceive them, were the remote good even proved to me, which it has not been."

"What then shall be their guide through life?"

"*La Morale.*"

"Whose system?"

"I scarcely can determine."

The *curé* smiled, and La Versière smiling too, added, "In the face of an argumentative antagonist to name a master were not wise."

"No truly. But I hope, that the system of morals, whose founder you hold so wisely secret, and which is to be your children's creed and guide, is at least more than a probability, since with such you have professed yourself discontented."

"The system, if it can be called one, is merely composed of simple truths, and chal-

lenges no authority but what reason allows. It makes no promises, and can therefore not deceive."

"How are its precepts to be enforced, deprived thus of the agency of hope or fear?"

"May not a generous mind act without reference to either—worship good as good and beautiful—shun evil as disgraceful—"

"There!" interrupted the *curé*.

"Not as disgraceful then," continued La Versière; "since you will say, that hope and fear would mingle in the motive, and that the opinion of our fellow men would in that case be our arbitrary guides—say, evil is to be shunned as ugly, as offending upright consciousness, as marring the ideal of virtue in the mind."

"Specious and sad," exclaimed the pastor,—"what a frail prop to support one through the world."

"Ye recluses," said La Versière smiling, "seem alway to look upon the world as a kind

of lion's den, or mortal *melée*, where nothing less than to be armed *cap-a pie*, the vizor drawn down over the eyes even to blindness, can preserve one from destruction."

"And you, La Versière," said the *curé* solemnly, and regarding fixedly the person whom he addressed, "can you, a Frenchman, who have been both witness and actor in your country's revolution—you, a Conventionalist, who have been proscribed and proscribing, who have seen the blood of the best flowing like water, in those times when philosophy reigned and Christianity was a crime in your land—can you demur to this life's being called a lion's den? Can you, who have seen foes and friends hurried to the scaffold, and have seen them too in the more awful act of despatching other victims thither, can you call life aught but a mortal *melée*? You have seen the fruit of the very principles you now profess. Sown long since, they seemed harmless, nay salutary in their growth, and *your* parent might not

have feared them for *you*. But you have seen them in full effect, in flower and in harvest, and can now choose to sow in *your* children's minds either the germ of fresh horrors, similar to what you have seen, or in its place a surer seed—"

Here the nerves of the old man failed his zeal; and moved by his own excitement as well as by the revolutionary horrors which his fancy brought to his view, his voice faltered, and the tears of emotion trickled down the furrows of his cheek.

"This was not in our pact," said La Versière, sharing his friend's emotion.

A silence of some moments ensued, during which the ruffled feelings of, indeed, us three, settled into a far deeper and sweeter calm, than that which preceded our momentary excitement. When it was resumed, it was with calmer and more harmonious views of the subject. The disputants had learned to respect one another, and minor points touching the

great subject of dispute were brought forward and discussed, not without interest, but still with forbearance and amenity.

I shall not follow all the windings of their desultory argument, rendered so delightful to me by the character of La Versière. He was a personage, whom I had become acquainted with in history, had esteemed dead (for the revolution, although but thirty years are upon computation found to have elapsed since it raged, is far more than half a century old in the chronology of those, beyond whose actual recollection it dates)—and now to find him before me, re-arguing the old *philosophy*, and freshly too—it was interesting as a scene of future remembrance. His very impiety, so disgusting at second-hand from the mouths of my compatriots and cotemporaries, seemed to come well from the ancient. It struck me, but as any other idle superstition, in which races of mankind have been educated; and greedy as I was of information and novelty, his so-

phisms were as delightful to me, as would have been the traditions of the Hindoo—far more delightful truly, as both more rational, and more demanding the exercise of reason to appreciate and detect them.

At length they came to speak of the latter ends of the irreligious, of Montesquieu, of Hume. The *curé* reluctantly allowed that the deaths of these men were as calm, as happy, as those of the most resigned and saintly; and that in the last scene, as well as in the conduct of life, none could have done more honour to humanity.

I here observed that, “Although certainly the most striking proof of religion was the complete and satisfactory manner in which it solved the great enigma of humanity; the universal fitness of it to all men, and to all conditions of men, so that human nature and it seemed, when brought in contact, mutually to correspond: yet that to this law, as to all others, there were exceptions, for instance, passionless

characters, cold and prudent, and therefore removed from most of the uneasinesses and anxieties of life; of that even flow of blood and temper, as to be easily ruled and guided by the voice of reason, without vice, without sorrow, without temptation, exempt from the chief pains and pleasures of their fellows, without the pale of humanity, and therefore scarcely amenable to its laws. If to all this be added an acute and reasoning mind, made contented by competence and fame, we shall have the great exceptions we have spoken of, may perceive at the same time how much and truly they are exceptions, and how from individuals such as these no conclusion can be drawn against the laws and aids requisite for the rest of mankind. With a view to this world only, it may be said of such a man, of many a person,—he may do without religion, he will prove an honest, moral, worthy member of society without its precepts,—but can this be said of men in general, can it be said of nations?"



“Even *I* fear not,” said La Versière candidly.

“Can it be said even of all the members of a family?” urged I; “is it in the nature of chance that they should be all passionless, reasonable, and exempt from that common proneness to ill, which nought but religion can counteract?”

“That is home,” said the *curé*; “I should have preached for years without coming to the point.”

La Versière pondered, but still shook his head.

“To push this gentleman’s argument farther,” continued the *curé*, “with examples that he cannot supply, there is Ossian La Versière, your eldest son, mild, studious, reasonable, and contemplative, who, young as he is, has worked out for himself a moral system, on which he stands, cold and proud; who metes his smallest actions by a reasoning rule, and who is honourable from self-taught principle, not from the prejudices of men—why him I should

have no fear of, in the most trying scenes of life (it is our pact to put futurity out of the question). But Oscar, your younger boy, the wild, impetuous, weak, passionate Oscar, what system devoid of hope or fear, or without hold upon a thoughtless mind, will uphold him through the life on which he already enters. And Cornelië too, your lovely daughter, sage as she is, if she want not a guide, yet she may want consolation, for is she secure from the ills of life, from ingratitude, injustice, disappointment—”

“ This part of your argument I *can* answer,” said La Versière ; “ consolation she will find in her own breast against the bitterest stroke of adversity.”

“ I doubt it,” said the *curé*.

“ To be frank in my turn,” said I, “ I scarcely do. The pride of philosophy consoles the strong mind, almost as much as religion. And it is as moral truth, more than as consolation, that I value the latter.”

“You are over-yielding for a believer,” said the *curé* to me.

“Nay,” replied I, “I have too much faith in the strength and truth of religion, to think it needs all the accessories that men bolster it up withal.”

“Let us not afford sport and speculation to this common foe of ours here. Rather let us unite our powers to persuade him to give up his family, ere it be too late, to my tuition, that I may give them to drink living water.”

“It is too late, my good friend,” said La Versière. “You know, I have never forbidden or debarred you what you now ask. My family are within your reach.”

“But without your aid, your open approbation, I should not be listened to.”

“That I cannot remedy. I have taught them their father’s creed; if they would change, they are welcome.”

The good *curé* cast up his eyes in hopelessness, he shook my hand cordially, as we retired separately to rest; and the parting salutation of La Versière was scarce less friendly.

## CHAPTER II.

DEEPER thoughts occupied me upon my couch, than those which generally haunt the idle wanderer. Solitude has been praised, as favouring serious reflection, I never found it so : having seldom been thoughtful to less purpose, than when abandoned altogether to myself. Nothings become then absorbing. The body, wearied, gives the mind excuse for repose; and the greatest intellectual feat of many a solitary journey, undertaken for the wisest and gravest of contemplation, turns out to be some high-piled castle in the air.

The sun rose not long before me on the following morning. The venerable *curé* was in

his garden, wearing the same anxious, benevolent look that I had observed the evening before. It seemed as if sleep had neither lulled nor interrupted the train of his ideas. It had not done so.

“ I am rejoiced at your coming,” said he, after the first salutations, “ and at your meeting with my neighbour. Especially if, as I take you to be, you are both generous and idle.”

“ One of the two at least,” was my reply.

“ Your society cannot but be of good effect to La Versière and his interesting family—far more than mine, for I am old, and crabbed, and crazy—moreover they have a prejudice against my garb—the word *prêtre* sounds to them, as it doth to every French ear, like execration.”

“ But me—how know you that my advances——”

“ Nay, if you have but the charity, it is sufficient. They are shunned here by every re-

sident, nay, the very peasant dreads to meet or hold converse with La Versière or any of his family. And were it not that my ministry sanctions my acquaintance, even I should suffer from the contact in the opinions of my virtuous but simple flock. Now you are a stranger, and above prejudice—”

“ Good God ! but why all this ? what has been their crime ? ”

“ You have heard me allude to it,” said the pastor. “ La Versière was of the Convention, one of its fiercest Jacobins.”

“ Impossible !—those gray hairs, that mild benevolent countenance, that voice of benignant sound—”

“ Alas ! in troublous times, chance more than man’s nature makes him what he is.”

“ True, and this man was a Jacobin, say you, the friend of Robespierre mayhap—”

“ No, not exactly—he even aided in that monster’s fall.”

“ I breathe, but what then, honourable men

sate in the Convention, nay, might have sate with upright motives amongst the very Jacobins. Is this all his crime?"

"He was one of the regicides," said the *curé*, in an under voice, "and as such is shunned by all, even by many, whom I have heard to uphold the crime itself as just."

"Free as you suppose me from prejudice, he is not the man I should select for a friend,"

"Nay, but he is a curiosity to a wandering moralizer. And how fate moreover assigned to him such a part, is beyond conjecture, for he is, even as he looks, mild, benignant, harmless, the weak instrument of the fierce popular cry perhaps, or of some crafty associate, swept along with a torrent, in which *his* principles and creed proved but a sorry stay. I earnestly desire better for his children."

"If you destine me to be their instructor," replied I, "you will be disappointed. I hold teaching in horror—and independent of that, could not endure the thought of cultivating



any one's friendship with a design. No, on my faith, I am no Quixote, spiritual or chivalric—and if the world wants mending, another individual must be found to undertake the task."

"Nay, I made no such proposal," said the *curé*, "at least no farther than your pleasure may accord with my design. Oscar La Versière is spirited, Ossian well-informed, romantic, and inquisitive, the father himself a living volume of history and memoir—his daughter Cornélie lovely—"

"Say not another word, my reverend friend."

"Your free, natural, unmeditated conversation is all I reckoned upon to further my design."

"You over-value its influence."

"Not at least the pleasure you will find in exercising it, should the name of regicide not deter you."

"I own, I like not the sound. But the

family have not shared in the crime, and are to be commiserated in suffering for it."

Our conversation was here interrupted by the appearance of the subject of it, who had just risen, and now joined us.

During the repast, of which we immediately partook, the *curé* took an opportunity to question me respecting my route and intentions. Receiving for answer that they were even then uncertain, to see picturesque beauty and follow up adventure being my only plan, La Versière observed, that perhaps I would have no objection to accompany him home. The invitation was coolly given, and arranged ; of this, however, understanding the cause, I did not allow it to stand betwixt me and my curiosity, if I should call the interest I felt by so impertinent a name. His offer was therefore frankly and instantly accepted. And soon bidding adieu to the venerable *curé*, we two bent our steps together eastward, leaving behind us Locle and the Doubs.

How beautiful was our path, here winding through a cultivated valley, rich in herds and pastures, and tenanted by the immense wooden establishment of a *vacherie*; and farther on climbing and surmounting some bleak summit, of which however the bareness and aridity was recompensed by the view that it of a sudden opened into an hundred vales. This is not the region of the loftier Alps, where the view is always barred, either by some peak loftier still than that which one has climbed, or, if a day's labour enable the traveller to gain the higher eminences, by the indistinguishable distance to which the plains are then sunk below. Here, as we stood upon a height, mountain and valley undulated before us, like the waves of a tempestuous sea, sinking onward to an extended plain as it approached the horizon, the far surface specked with shining lakes,—whilst nearer and to our right, that of Neufchatel interrupted the succession of ridges and ravines, and lay, its

farther shore almost the boundary of our prospect.

La Versière pointed out to me each place remarkable for either its beauty or recollections, and this not with the vanity of a man vaunting his native haunts, which is the besetting sin of all *cicerones*, whether peasants or proprietors, but with imagination pleasingly unoccupied with the all-importance of the scene. It was not merely *look here*, and *look there*; but each name suggested to his tongue some character, or anecdote, or opinion, whimsical or sound, in hearing and discussing which, the intervals betwixt my raptures and admiration of the scene were delightfully passed. He, it is true, did not join in these raptures, but culled his specimen of wild flower or of heath in the mean while. Not that he was dead to rural beauty, but that a little patch of meadow pleased him more than the most far-stretched view.

“ This prospect now, if I allowed it,” said

he, "would bring me back to past times, would place me again on the eminences of youth and hope, from whence I looked down upon the world, and began my career through it with ardour. I like not this, it embitters my spirit, and makes me misanthropic, which I would not be. The retrospect over such a vain, cruel, blind, and ungrateful world hardens me. I am like Lot's wife," continued the old man smiling, and quoting a volume that he was not unfamiliar with, "if I look back, I become indurated."

In the nook of a far distant vale, La Versière pointed out to me the place of his retreat, surrounded by dark pine groves, and separated by them from a village or hamlet of a few shepherds' huts. The ridge of the hill above was crowned with fir, of which its rugged, serrated, but highly picturesque outline here and there displayed a gap, through which some impetuous gust had forced itself a passage. The same wood but partially covered

the side of the hill, and where the axe had made inroads, bright pastures and chalets appeared, pleasingly contrasted with the dark groves above and around. It was a beautiful situation, but over-retired, and even in summer led one to think upon its dreariness, when snows and winter winds prevailed.

Little more than an hour's farther walk brought us to the gate of the little mansion—in England it would have been called a cottage, in France a *chateau*. And whatever seemed dreary in its distant appearance, vanished altogether upon nearer approach. The hand of taste and care appeared in all its *alentours*: vineyard and orchard, fruits and flowers appeared, tended by more active hands than that of my old companion. Climbing shrubs seemed almost to weigh down the rustic porch; and the wide windows widely open (one charm of the south) displayed all the apartments of the house.

There was more fragrance than furniture

within—but what of that?—Cornélie bounded forth to welcome her father, and me as a stranger afterward, with some surprise but with no embarrassment, not even using the art, as she approached me, of divesting her countenance of the glad smile, which the sight of her father had called up. Her look and presence shed a feeling of happiness instantly around me. Alas! that smile, and the flush which accompanied it, soon vanished, and I saw, that such was not her habitual mien, that joy dwelt not with her, nor even visited her breast, except upon such brief occasions as that I first witnessed.

The countenance of Cornélie La Versière, one from a hurried glance would describe as that of a Minerva. It was that however of a French Minerva, differing little in outline from the Grecian, except perhaps that the nose was longer, and somewhat compressed. Her large dark eye was also far too expressive for that of a mere abstraction or fabulous

personage; and there was a melancholy in it, that would have ill befitted Olympus. It was the gravity of her gait and demeanour, probably, that afterwards suggested to me the resemblance, heightened by an antique mode of coiffure, that she had adopted more in obedience to her father's taste than to her own. He had been guided by classical and republican associations in the selection of her name; the same feelings, to which his exile and misfortunes still more attached him, for La Versière considered himself as a martyr to the cause of liberty, made him delight to look upon his daughter as a Roman or a Grecian maiden. He regretted indeed, that he had not named her Portia—but that would have been arrogance.

Thus much of Cornélie's character had been acquired and put upon her. Much however had been natural. And now all was nature and unaffected in her. If aught of the grave or the antique had been superinduced upon her simple character, it had been grafted so



young, that the grown plant betrayed no sign of bearing other than its own fruit.

Her brother Ossian—it strikes the reader no doubt, as it did me, how absurd and in how little keeping it was to have two members of a family, the one named from Livy, the other from Macpherson. But in the early days of the French revolution, the mania for Celtic antiquity rivalled, in poetic taste at least, even that for classic. Buonaparte himself was a declared admirer and patron of the son of Fingal, and previous to that general's celebrity, Ossian was no less a favourite with the Directory and the leaders of the Convention. Obedient to the whim of the day, and compelled indeed to some such choice, since Christian saints and names were out of fashion, La Versière called his two sons Ossian and Oscar, as their elder sister had been doomed by the antecedent taste, to bear the name of the mother of the Gracchi.

Her brother Ossian soon made his appear-

ance, armed with a volume of Bernardin St. Pierre, and Oscar, soon after, clad in a chamois hunter's garb, having just returned from an expedition of the kind amongst the Alps. The elder brother was slight of form, mild of countenance, and dark, in features somewhat resembling Cornélie; Oscar was fair-haired, ruddy, huge of limb, and of a monstrous hand, in appearance well befitting his name, notwithstanding his southern birth.

It is a delightful scene to see parents and children meet, when they are all in all to each other. Let me add, this is much more and oftener the case in France than it is with us. There may be the same affection perhaps, but it is more sombre and tacit; such ties with us want the tenderness and devotedness, which they possess on the continent. We are more animal in this department of our domestic affections; we rear with love, with attention, but no sooner find our offspring independent of us in reason and strength, than we

turn them forth to form other affections, and a domestic circle for themselves. The child of a French parent may be said to be never weaned.

They lose no doubt by this much of our boldness, originality, and independence of character : but to a moral contemplatist, like myself, they gain far more in the interest which they excite.

His children gathered around old La Versière, questioned him of his stay, its cause, of M. Thouin, the venerable pastor, of me, of a thousand trifles moreover, and all, including the rough Oscar himself, with a tenderness, that was touching. It affected me. It was new.

La Versière perceived what I felt, and said, "You see, the affections of the lonely, undissipated abroad, are concentrated at home. They overflow with us ; indeed, we have some little that we could spare," continued he, shaking off both Ossian and his sister.

“And I am sure,” said Ossian, “we do bestow affection and attention elsewhere. I have your old friend St. Pierre here, Oscar has his gun. And Cornélie”—here the youth checked himself, as if he was approaching a forbidden or delicate subject.

And his father, interrupting him, said, “Come, I beg you to employ some of your surplus friendship in welcoming this English gentleman. His coming deserves it as an era, for except Monsieur Thouin, he is truly the first, friend or stranger, that has ever crossed our threshold, since we came.”

“What friends or visitors could we possibly have in this lone region, and in a land which does not produce gentry?” said Oscar proudly, seeking to indicate his rank in society before a stranger.

“An Englishman!” ejaculated Ossian at the same time that his brother spoke. Cornélie, without the ejaculation, directed her eyes towards me with the same expression of cu-

riosity. Oscar too caught the information of what country I was of from the mouth of Ossian, and looked too, but without any of that friendly feeling in his countenance, which his father had invoked in my favour.

“Your look, Oscar, seems to say, that an Englishman was the last person you expected to behold here.”

“It was my thought,” replied the young man.

“Have Frenchmen, then, been so good, so grateful to us,” asked the father.

“I have no wish,” said Oscar bitterly, “but to see both countries expire in the gripe of each other.”

“Fie, brother,” said Ossian.

“That, I think, is a specimen of our superfluous affections,” added the old man, nowise moved by his son’s bitterness.

“Monsieur has been most kind to accompany you, father,” said Cornélie, “especially to this dull and retired corner, the amusements of which you surely did not exaggerate.”

"Not I in truth," said La Versière; "I did not make mention of even any one of you, holding out as an inducement merely an old hermit's converse."

I said something complimentary, as may be supposed.

"Monsieur shall not lack amusements," said Ossian, who evidently warmed to the stranger more than either his brother or sister, "I have walks, and books, and curiosity to employ him, father has recollections, and Oscar's gun or Cornélie's harp will surely come in at intervals to ward off ennui."

"If Monsieur is fond of sport," cried Oscar, kindling up, and becoming friendly at the thought.

"I shall be delighted to accompany you to the mountains," said I.

"Will you," cried Oscar, coming forward, and grasping my hand.

Cordiality was infectious, and as its smile was lit up in every countenance, Cornélie

swept the chords of her harp, and sung to a little air of Gretry's a song, of which the following is a translation :

When cold from me the world hath turned,  
And fortune fled away,  
When dim the lamp of friendship burned,  
And love withheld its ray :  
Oh then, the wild rose on the thorn,  
The bird upon the tree,  
The sweet and lonely breath of morn,  
Were friends enough for me.

When solitude my soul oppressed,  
When recollection broke  
At times on mine oblivious rest,  
And all the past awoke :  
Oh then, the brawling of the stream,  
The music of the bee,  
The notes that people the sunbeam,  
Were soothing friends to me.

When even the face of nature shed  
A gloom upon my heart,  
And when that fiend, despair, I bade  
In vain, and oft, depart :  
Oh then, the noisy crowd beneath,  
The dance, or, it may be,  
The wayfarer upon the heath,  
Were welcome friends to me.

### CHAPTER III.

HOURS and days glided on so happily for me, that whether their sum would have formed weeks or months, my memory neither could then nor can now determine. Out of doors, Ossian was my constant companion: wood and fell, lake, ravine, and torrent, we explored together, never weary of the scene, never weary of each other. A mixture of curiosity and reverence first attached him to me as an Englishman; and as the former became gratified and allayed upon acquaintance, the latter settled into that firm and tender friendship, which a youth may inspire, and entertain for a man some ten or twelve years his senior.



Like all young Frenchmen, Ossian La Verrière had had no education whatsoever, none, at least, of what *we* should call education. He had acquired a smattering of Latin, and what he knew of the classic writers of that language was gathered more from hearsay than perusal. At the university, he had listened to a course or two of philosophical lectures, in which inefficient mode of teaching no sort of philosophy had been taught. There had been no textbook or standard work set down for either teaching or learning, each professor being left to his whim, his pedantry, or his ignorance to preach what, and from what master he pleased. As his school was not confined to the students of the university alone, but was also fashionably attended, he consulted his own vanity in his declamations, rather than the advantage of his pupils; and the eloquent mysticism and paradoxes which he ambitiously uttered *ex cathedrâ*, were merely calculated to raise the lecturer's own character with the world as a man

of talent, instead of producing either advantage or instruction to the young. In the college, where Ossian had followed his studies, one professor regularly lectured upon revolutions and government and the history of his country, thus plunging the young mind into the labyrinth of politics, ere it had been provided with the clue of moral principle. Another taught philosophy forsooth, that is, uttered critical commentaries on Condillac and Kant, replete with that epigrammatic truth, that is at once so very piquant and so little instructive, that would convey pleasure perhaps to the idle readers of a periodical work, but which to young students was worse than mummary. Think merely of making a class of youths, of boys, go through a course of German philosophy, the German philosophy of yesterday, philosophy that even Dugald Stewart declares is either nonsense or *caviare* to him. This one absurdity is sufficient to give an idea of the state of public education in

France, where, appended to this enlightened, novel, and unprejudiced mode of teaching philosophy, in contradistinction to our Gothic modes at Cambridge and Oxford, is such a scholastic winding up of study, as that of *doing one's Rhetoric*.

Ossian listened attentively to the political lecturer of his college, to the philosophical lecturer of the same, both of which instructors supplied him with zeal at least, if not with ideas; and finally he *did his Rhetoric*, as the cant of the *Pays Latin* has it; in other words, wrote a theme or two, with credit to his industry and talents.

When, however, young Ossian hoped to follow up his career by studying for the French bar, or, as they say, attempted to *faire son droit*, he found, poor youth, that he had "fallen on evil days, and evil times." There was a secret, but not the less virulent reaction on the part of the restored government, not against its old enemies, for they were extinct or in obli-

vion tantamount, but against the innocent offspring of those revolutionary characters. Ossian La Versière was denied the permission of inscribing his name to become an advocate. He demanded a reason for his exclusion: meanness was added to malice in the dictation of the answer, which was, that they could admit or recognize no student with the *Heathen Christian* name of Ossian.

Oscar, who had been at the Ecole Polytechnique previous to the restoration, and who, then but a youth, had been wounded in eighteen hundred and fourteen, on the heights of Mont Martre, defending with his school-fellows the capital of their country against the Russians—Oscar too found himself debarred of a profession upon the restoration of the Bourbons. He quitted the school, but could never make his way into the ranks of the army.

Long had old La Versière consoled himself upon the failure of his own schemes of ambi-

tion, upon his ill success in life, and consequent narrowness of fortune, by the thought that his children would commence the world with better prospects, and in better times; when a government at once settled and free would preclude for his offspring the possibilities of the crimes and misfortunes into which he had himself fallen; and would at the same time open to them legitimate paths of ambition, in which their own talent, joined to their father's experience, might enable them to advance. Whatever acts he had joined in, whatever virulence he had seemingly partaken of, he hoped that his age and a quarter of a century's lapse would sink such recollections in oblivion, especially under the reign of the descendants of the generous Henry the Fourth. At worst, thought he, what are exile or torture to these old limbs, surely they cannot visit the father's principles upon his children?

They did so, nevertheless. Not that the

restored Louis was either vengeful or despotic ; but that in France so closely woven was and still remains its population in the spider web of tyranny and servility, that were the Prince himself a Trajan, we should find his government carried on, in his despite, by a body of Sejani.

Exiled himself by name, LaVersière retired to Switzerland. Shut out from every profession, from every means of earning their bread, his sons had no inducement to remain behind. And Cornelie, but more of her hereafter.

Seeking to banish disaffection from the minds of its subjects, the French government largely created it. Oscar, bred to war, yet denied enrolment in the armies of his country, became one of those discontented, martial spirits, ready to join the standard of revolt wherever it was raised. Ossian, instead of being allowed to merge his enthusiasm in the Pandects and the Code, was turned adrift to read Rousseau, Condillac, Condorcet ; and as

letters seemed the only career open to him—that one of which misfortune so often points out the path to genius,—he was turned forth to become, as far as his talent would enable him, a *publiciste* and an apostle of liberty, instead of directing his peaceable course towards the bar, and treading in the illustrious steps of Isambert or Dupin.

To what moral guide the brothers were abandoned, I have before hinted at. The last stroke of fortune had deprived their parent's mind of energy, as well as of hope. Thoughtless of, even if not denying, the very existence of a Providence, he ceased to deliver the precepts of morality, which he had been wont to impress upon his children, and, save now and then an advice or a word respecting their personal safety or worldly prudence, La Versière abandoned them altogether to their dispositions and their fate. He still loved them, but it was with a mute, sad love, conscious of its want of power to impart or bequeath aught to

the objects of it, not even a hope in immortality or a belief in virtue. He was a most unhappy father, whenever he thought, whenever his spirits were low, or his mood contemplative.

“Good God !” thought I to myself, “place a Christian in this state of exile, surrounded by such a family, and what a picture of happiness would it present? Every deprivation would be converted into a source of happiness, and every misfortune, like the bee with its sting drawn, would yield nothing but sweet.”

I repeated this to La Versière, he smiled—to Ossian, and the youth stared without comprehending me.

Ossian was my chief and constant companion. Indeed it was through friendship to him, and the continued acceding to his entreaties, that I remained so long with the family. The old Conventionalist himself was friendly and entertaining; but it was at few periods of the day, and then but for a short



time, that he could support society or conversation—the lethargy of age was creeping fast upon him. Oscar was abroad amongst the hills; and even more domestic hours, which he could not have employed in the pursuit of game, I perceived that he spent elsewhere than at home. The lovely Cornélie was sad and cold to me, absorbed, it seemed, in grief, of which I was restrained by delicacy from inquiring the cause. Her eyes, indeed, never betrayed tears, even though past; but her pale cheek, abstracted thoughts, or attention, when she deigned such, constrained, alienated, as well as interested me. She was often about to be amiable, when recollection checked the propensity of her nature—the smile subsided, the look of confidence died away:—and I was compelled to shun a society, which put me to pain and made me ill at ease. Yet I overheard her solitude at times, when her harp spoke, and her voice with it, in tones so pathetic and feeling, that

I was sure some latent cause must exist, that marred the harmony of her temper, and made it jangle, "like sweet bells out of tune," so as to fret and sadden all around, whom she was born to charm.

Ossian, however, was never-failing as a companion, in the ready mood, either to listen or talk, to trifle or be serious, with amiable deference and sufficient pride. He was, indeed, somewhat too indefatigable in his pursuit of argument or opinion: and I have started to find him at my bed-side ere sun-rise, ready to commence the moment I opened my eyes, with, "What you said is very true, but then I cannot but think—"

"Pray, when did I say any such thing?"

"Last night before we separated."

The hours of sleep had brought to his young mind no anxious thought to interrupt or chase away the thread of his speculations. This was at times troublesome, but in sum delightful to me. It made me feel an interest

in many subjects, well worthy interest the most profound, which in the world or alone I had lightly considered or cursorily glanced at. Our elders, or our contemporaries and equals in talents and acquirements, may in general prove the best society for improvement. And yet to listen to superiors, or come into collision with rivals, will often have less effect in strengthening the intellect, in making it fathom and comprehend itself, than simply bringing it in contact with that of a junior or a child.

For whole days would he question me respecting England, whose institutions and character he had learned to venerate; though it was late ere he could do so—ere he could shake off the atrocious idea which he had been first taught to entertain of our island—ere he could see the falsehood as well as the malignity of the cuckoo-song of Le Brun,

“*Avare et perfide Angleterre,*” &c.

Like most of his generous and enthusiastic young countrymen, Ossian now flew from one extreme to the other ; and from believing England to be the mother of treachery and avarice in the political world, as well as that of barbarism in taste and civilization, he was ready to fall down and worship her supremacy in all things. This, no doubt, was the great link betwixt us.

Literary arguments we had in abundance ; and my opinions on this score shocked him as much, and appeared as great heresies to him, as did the opinions in more serious matters, which he had been taught and of course professed, appear to me. When I considered Voltaire's *Tales* to be inferior imitations of the style of Swift,\* he was aghast ; and when I called his beloved Bernardin St. Pierre's description of the physical effects of puberty upon ' *Virginie*,' to be worse than indecorous, to be beastly, Ossian did not speak to me for

\* ' *Micromegas* ' and the ' *Quinze-Vingts* ' perhaps excepted.

four-and-twenty hours, so indignant and hurt was he at the remark.

A conversation of this kind took place one afternoon. The argument turned upon passionate novels, and was, if I remember right, suggested by a volume of "Delphine" happening to lie upon the table, a work that Ossian had lately borrowed and perused. After some critical discussions, that would be here out of place, Ossian said, that "it had cost him a world of tears."

"What work has not, my dear Ossian?" said Cornélie: "Your tears are so near to your eyes, that the sorriest ballad causes them to overflow."

"They are the dew of the spirit," observed the poetic Ossian, "sweet and refreshing after the long, garish, overpowering day-light of worldliness."

"It is unmanly," said Cornélie.

"I know not what their appearance may be. But I should esteem them more likely to nerve

the arm, than to make it falter, in the hour when courage is required."

"But the characteristics, the outward appearance of courage is useful, as often superseding the necessity of putting it to the proof," said the old man.

"That may be true," replied Ossian, "but of what value is the mere mask of manhood, compared with the precious gift of sensibility, which, as my friend here describes religion to do, in causing us to sympathize with the sorrows of our brethren, extracts the bitterness from our own."

"I do believe, Ossian, thou wert born to be a devotee."

Ossian blushed at a taunt, which accused him of deserting the philosophic creed of his father, and of being unable to support the dignity of free thought.

"And have I never seen you to weep, Cornélie," said her brother.

"Not over ideal woes."

“Not even when they happened to resemble your own—when they were the counterpart of what troubled your own heart?”

“My heart, me!” said Cornélie, blushing in her turn.

“Nay, sister, we all have feelings, as well as sorrows. Your taunt called the blood to my cheeks; and I have had my revenge,—more than my revenge,” added he, as he perceived the abjured tears roll down Cornélie’s cheek.

He stepped forward to take her by the hand, when she abruptly quitted the room.

“How absurd and contradictory,” said Ossian, turning to me, for his father was by this time dosing asleep, “are all our little vanities. Here I, whom the enmity of fortune has merely chased from a crowded city and troublesome hopes to sweet retirement and study, and who am truly happy in all moods, pride myself upon my capabilities of gratuitous suffering and sorrow; whilst Cornélie, whose heart has been wrung by ingratitude, prides

herself on being hardened, and proof against grief."

"Not absurd, but natural," observed I, "that we should welcome that degree of sensibility which affords us pleasure, and turn against and defy the feeling when it swells to bitterness and anguish. But Cornélie—her melancholy has long inspired me with interest and curiosity, dare I inquire of you the cause?"

"I had purposed to tell you," said Ossian, "and will at once relate it. But the pine-grove will be the fittest scene for the story. We will step forth."



## CHAPTER IV.

CORNÉLIE's story may be briefly told. An officer of gallantry and merit under Napoleon had become attached to her ; and she, an admirer of heroism, soon returned his affection two-fold. Unfortunately for both, his career had begun late, and fell upon those disastrous times when the military glory of France was in the wane. The expedition to Russia had called him off from their meditated nuptials ; and, although he returned from the North with honour and rank increased, still the invasion now imminent on France, and the perils that menaced his Sovereign, allowed Colonel Girouette no leisure for private happiness. Cornélie

herself was as much interested in public events as her lover, and would have scorned, even more than he, to proceed with her own private plans of felicity, during the great struggle between contending principles and nations. Little attached previously to Napoleon, whom she looked upon as the Gallic Cæsar, the conqueror of his country's foes, but still the destroyer of its liberty, hers, with many another heart, that beat with patriotism and a love of freedom, rallied in the despot's favour, when they beheld, what they deemed, a more pernicious cause about to triumph over him. She forgot his tyranny, his crimes, his ambition; and considering him but as the glorious representative of that revolution, in which her parent had acted so proud a part, and of which she might call herself a child, she felt every wish and vow of her breast rise in his behalf. In this indeed, however unjust as a lover of liberty—for Louis *must* evidently reign constitutionally, and Napoleon as evidently *could* not—she was

not unreasonable, as the triumph of royalty over revolution in the persons of their ostensible chiefs, would infallibly degrade her parent and his family from the consideration in which hitherto they had been held, nay, might drive the old Conventionalist into exile, or place his very head in peril.

Great as was the abyss of misfortune into which the family seemed about to plunge, Cornélie did not fathom it altogether: the worst came unexpectedly upon her. The allies entered Paris: there ensued for her half a year of humiliation and despair, for Girouette did not blush to retain his epaulettes under the new regime. Napoleon came from Elba; Cornélie breathed again, and to her joy, her lover re-drew his sword for his old master, and marched to the field of Waterloo. The sword of the Colonel was drawn in vain, and was left upon the field of battle. Being, however, not one of the most conspicuous traitors, and having the requisite audacity

and suppleness to shew himself once more at the Thuilleries on the king's return, the Colonel obtained another sword, made the bee on his accoutrements give place once more to the lily, the imperial crown to the regal, and the *N* to the two interlaced *LL*'s of his new master Louis.

The high-minded Cornélie was greatly shocked at this fickleness, this apparent want of all firmness and principle on the part of her lover. It answered ill to her lofty ideal of heroism and patriotism; and for several weeks her consequent contempt of Girouette was supreme. But the Colonel, in despite of all this fickleness, was gallant and good-hearted; and, moreover, pleaded his cause with a frankness, a good-humour, and with such vivacity, that his frequent change of parties would have seemed, at least to the eyes of any other lady than Cornélie La Versière, to become this *esprit volage*, as much as fickleness in affairs of the heart was con-

sidered to become the gay gallant of the last age. Then Girouette's was not a singular case: if he had sinned, some hundred thousand of his comrades had sinned with him; and such numbers, we know, can be brought before no tribunal—'tis madness to accuse them—" *c'est quereller avec le genre humain*," as De Stael says, and seems to think an absurdity.

La Versière too,—and if one feeling predominated over another in the breast of Cornélie, it was that of love and devotion towards her parent—came with his worldly views and reasonings to the aid of Girouette. Much he argued upon human nature, and the way of the world, much on the trying circumstances of the times, which those, he said, who were above in fortune, might be above in conduct. The Duke of T——, retired upon his property, acquired during a long and glorious career, and as secure to him as his fame in history, may keep aloof from either party, and care

not much which wins, but Girouette, who has nought but his commission—

“Nay but, dear father,” would Cornélie interrupt, “consider ourselves in ancient Rome, or put such excuses for a hero into the mouth of Plutarch, and how should we exclaim?”

“Were we in Rome, dear Cornélie, we should do as Romans. But here we are in Paris.”

“Why then was I given a Roman name?”

“We were fools enough in those days to believe that a name bestowed heroism, as well as virtue and freedom. We have found since, that names are but names.”

“I would at least act up to mine.”

“Cornelia,” said La Versière, “was known but as the mother of the Gracchi. She herself lived in the times this aristocracy triumphed, and was contented to live in, nay wed in such adverse times, that she might rear up children to be the assertors of her country’s liberty. If you wed not this honourable suitor, who in

this new reign will not fear to woo, or even approach, the daughter of a regicide?"

Cornélie felt the force of her father's arguments, nay, she felt even more than he urged in behalf of Colonel Girouette: and this was, that, tainted as she must allow his patriotism and public honour to be in some degree, his private honour remained whole and untouched. Were he not actuated by such, and by a lively attachment moreover, would he continue his addresses to the daughter of a regicide, and still be eager to conclude a connexion, which must so hurt his prospects, and stand as a mighty obstacle betwixt him and the patronage of the now reigning family. This argued disinterestedness. This demanded gratitude. And in consequence of such reflections, still sighing and regretting, nevertheless, that her love had fallen from her ideal of heroic perfection, Cornélie rendered to Girouette the heart that she had half withdrawn.

The soldier was again happy. Cornélie had

not been deceived, when she reckoned in him a heart devoted to her. But both she and her father had considerably over-rated his discernment. A son of the revolution himself, altogether unacquainted with the principles and prejudices of the once ancient and now restored government, he formed no idea of the depth in which it still held its old hatreds rooted, of the vengeance and re-action which it meditated. He entertained no fear, that an aged ex-conventionalist, so insignificant and forgotten as La Versière was now, could excite the attention or resentment of the government. And in the connexion he was about to form, the soldier at first saw no obstacle, no bar whatever in the way of his advancement.

Others, however, had the discernment which he wanted. And the whisper that buzzed around the court, some conversations with his comrades in the *Salle des Marechaux*, soon informed him, that it would be prudent to delay



a little at least the completion of his marriage with the daughter of La Versière.

Cornélie saw this delay, and arrived at the comprehension of its cause with indignation ill-stifled. Her parent, however, wary and prudential, rather prized his future son-in-law the more for his caution. The ambition, too, of the old man had of late become awakened by the free government, which Louis thought either proper or prudent to *octroy* to his people. There was about to be an election of representatives for the lower legislative chamber, and La Versière, after more than twenty years' retirement from public cares or business, eagerly plunged once more into the vortex of intrigue. His object was one of nicety and difficulty; and at length he promised himself success, through the medium of a princely and sacerdotal personage to whose party, in case of his election, he promised to attach himself. One would think, that the preliminary sacri-

fice of independence might have disgusted the veteran statesman:—but no, he was resolved to fish in troubled waters at any price.

His ambition hastened his ruin and disgrace. He was elected, and no sooner returned to the chamber, than he was expelled, and voted ineligible. But for the notoriety which this (for his expulsion had not passed without a fierce debate) drew around him, the old Conventionalist might perhaps have been permitted to linger out his days in his beloved Paris. But now he was obliged to fly; and thus by a last, weak, listening to ambition, the old man not only expatriated himself, but ruined the hopes of his family.

Cornélie alone seemed to rise superior to misfortune, and rejoice in the political martyrdom, which she considered her parent to suffer. It shed also around his decline a blaze of notoriety, which her filial love mistook for fame. And she was not sorry, that

there was now an opportunity of putting to the proof the depth of her lover's attachment, and the true temper of his mind.

If she wished for this, fortune had been ungraciously kind in granting her desire. For it did indeed put Col. Girouette's attachment to the proof. Not that it abated his love ; for his, though a soul of alloy, was not altogether of baser metal. But it certainly put other and weighty considerations into the opposite scale, which balanced and kept most indecisive his resolutions respecting his mistress.

When the La Versières, however, departed for Switzerland, he took leave of her with every symptom of true and desperate attachment. Cornélie's grief still partook of contempt. Ossian looked on and believed the Colonel's sincerity ; whilst Oscar, boy as he was, was with difficulty restrained from defying him to mortal combat, or running him through without waiting for such preliminary.

Two or three years had since elapsed. Sentiments on all sides seemed to have remained much the same, save that the secretly-conveyed threats of Oscar, had tended more than even Girouette's worldliness totally to break off the affair.

Cornélie too, though she had loved, might be said to have ceased to love. Visions of hope no longer made part of her dreams, or came to cheer the sorrows of her waking solitude. Thoughts of ingratitude and disappointment seemed alone to possess her. A hatred and distrust of the world was the sentiment evident throughout her conversation, unless at times, when her woman's heart reluctantly betrayed itself. Her affections were thrown back upon her, and were only prevented from rankling into utter misanthropy by the love which she bore her parent. To that they turned. For all impulses of affection spring from the same source, and from the same want: if disappointed in one ob-

ject, or shut from one exit, they make their escape and rush towards another.

Yet it is in vain that one seeks to concentrate or contain the many and mighty impulses of a great passion within the scope of a smaller one. Cornélie loved, and when she found that she had bestowed her affections upon an unworthy object, it was not with complete success that her stoicism endeavoured to transfer her feelings and emotions from love to filial affection. A surplus remained within her breast, and turned to gall. In vain she attempted and affected to condemn the world and her lover: her misanthropy was too bitter for her apathy to be complete; and the outward semblance of tranquillity and coldness, which she wore, covered restlessness and anguish. The struggle undermined her health, even more than an abandonment to despair could have done; for here her spirits would have fathomed the depths of sorrow, and rebounded. Whereas she struggled for

life near the surface, sunk slowly, and to rise no more.

Ossian wept, as he recounted to me the causes of his sister's sorrow. "It draws, however, now to a crisis," said he; "Colonel Girouette has been ordered to Strasbourg, from whence the distance hither is not great. And we shall soon know what his real intentions are and have been. If he fail——" The young man's look bespoke his intentions, and both seemed not less resolute for the natural mildness of his character.

## CHAPTER V.

A LITTLE matter occurred some time after, which it is of no consequence to set down here, and of as little to allude to, save that as I was of some use, and proved myself friendly to the La Versières, more indeed from the betrayal of my sentiments, than from any actual benefit that was in my power, our intimacy came to be more closely established. The old man spoke to me as a senior, Oscar no longer shrunk from including me in the reproaches which he frequently cast on Ossian for being a sentimentalist and a moper over volumes, whilst Cornélie began to feel herself as free and alone

in my company, as if I was either nobody or one of the family.

This many may consider as no kind of compliment. To me, however, it was the greatest; being inexorably love-proof, and that for the best of reasons, having fallen in and out of that said predicament one dozen times at least ere I was twenty, and almost as often since, amongst which the first at thirteen years, and the last at three-and-twenty, I may note down as the most remarkable and serious. Thus the world is to me, nay, the very world of romance is, what the stage was to a thorough-bred critic of the last century, when critics actually went to play-houses, viz. a subject for dissection, not emotion. Hence Cornélie's indifference to my presence was the most welcome, as well as the most flattering of compliments.

She soon understood, moreover, that Ossian had disclosed to me the story of at once her misanthropy and sorrow. She was neither pleased nor wroth on perceiving this;—her



feelings were alike above vain disclosure, or the dread of it :

“ For there are griefs, my friend, that sufferers hide,  
And there are griefs, that men display with pride ;  
But there are other griefs, that, so we feel,  
We care not to display them nor conceal.”

One morning Monsieur Thouin, the *curé* already introduced to the reader, made his appearance at our *dejeuné*. He was welcomed cordially by old La Versière and his daughter, with delight by Ossian, but with scowls and sullenness by Oscar. I thought at first that this conduct on the part of the youth was mere ill-humour and ill-breeding ; but I soon perceived from the sternness of the *curé's* looks, that there did exist some cause, some recent cause yet undiscussed, of displeasure on the *curé's* part against Oscar, and a consequent fear and sullenness in the latter. The clergyman's visit was probably occasioned by this very circumstance, whatever it might be ; as he was evidently unexpected, and bespoke in

his countenance more serious thoughts than became a visit of friendship.

The *curé*, however, kept those thoughts in reserve, he brightened up in a little time, joined in the conversation, assented to the proposal of his spending the day, and to all eyes, save those of Oscar and myself, society and friendship appeared the sole motive of his coming.

"You here yet, Sir," said he, addressing me, "did I not prophesy your amusement?"

"It is but a small compliment to such a family, to say they have interested and detained with them the idlest of all wanderers."

"Not altogether idle and fruitlessly employed since he has been here," rejoined Thouin, significantly.

"Altogether," said I. "You remember my declaration."

"Nay, that cannot be. For the very existence of a rationally religious man amongst infidels goes far, without a single argument, to

shake their blindness and obstinacy, which consists more in contempt for what they call superstition, than in any solid-laid disbelief. A zealot, like myself, who cannot keep himself from preaching, offers infallibly the ridiculous side, and thus hardens them. But a sober, cool believer, who neither meditates their conversion, nor deigns to argue, but simply professes belief, and shews the rational man of sense on all other points, verily, he is the sort of apostle that shakes these *philosophers* in their negative principles, and ignorant self-satisfaction."

I shook my head, but the *curé* gave a counter-shake, which meant to say, "I know better."

Numerous good-humoured and light topics occupied the morning. It was not, until he found the family collected after their early dinner, that Thouin asked La Versière, "whether he had since thought on the request he had made of him, when last at Locle?"

"Truly I have not," said the father of the family. "I spoke then a ready and a conclusive answer, unless you have since lit upon some argument yet unurged and of sovereign weight."

"That perhaps I have."

"I thought so, my dear friend, by the all-importance of your countenance. Well—here are the persons concerned—My children, M. Thouin would make Christians of you all."

Oscar smiled contemptuously.

"Nay, sir," said Thouin to the youth, "until you prove yourself an upright, moral man, according to the principles you profess, I will allow of no sneers against what you do not understand."

Oscar's blood rose.

"I hope, he will never be found other," said the father.

"You are a minister of peace, not dissension," said Cornélie imploringly. The *curé* understood her, and remained silent, while Oscar departed.

"Indeed, Sir," continued Cornélie, "your zeal is thrown away. We will abide by the opinions of our father."

"What! you too, my daughter," said the pastor, "whom I thought to have long since convinced—who listened, and allowed the fairness and cogency of my reasoning."

"'Tis true, Sir. But I cannot recall that chain of argument at need, and even if I could, it would not supply that philosophic pride, that makes me condemn the ills of life."

"That is, because you have not advanced far enough in religion to have a *feeling* of it. You heard but its rational proofs. The feeling comes later, is of far more sweetness, tenacity, and force. Persevere, and you will find it."

"Do, my child," said old La Versière; "the pleasures and consolations of enthusiasm are more powerful than those of reason. And you will need the most powerful."

"Truly, though insidiously spoken," said Thouin; "but see that the basis of enthusiasm be truth, then you may taste its pleasures, and receive its consolations with safety."

"And who will lay that basis?"

"Neither the idle, nor the ignorant, nor the self-satisfied," replied the pastor.

Ossian here interposed to interrupt rising warmth, by breaking his lance with the *curé*. "On me too, M. Thouin, your arguments have had some influence, and my conversation with the friend here, whom you procured us, has made them sink deeper. What have been nations without religion, urge you, but still degenerating races of men? And you are right. The mob must have their creed, which may be symbolically true for them, as that of the Jews was for the superstitious rabble of their nation. But allow me to think, that reason and philosophy may furnish higher intellects with a faith purer and more befitting them."

“And where is to be found a society of those higher intellects?”

“In history—in Pliny’s letters, which I have been just perusing, and which have done more, I promise you, than Voltaire to turn me from your counsels. When I contemplate in those pages the higher order of Romans of that day, their nice honour, their generosity, courage, and contempt of death, their Platonic loftiness of sentiment—when I contemplate all this, I own, I cannot see the necessity of revelation to mankind.”

The eyes of Cornélie brightened with delight at what she considered the eloquence of Ossian.

“It is but an outwork of religion that you attack,” said Thouin, “an insignificant outwork, but still as it is one, through which the thoughtless unbeliever, when he recurs to religion, generally directs his retreat, I will defend it—and that simply by asserting that Pliny was a romancer, his heroes, including

himself, slaves and adulators as public men, as well as debauched and sunk below all the laws of morality as private men—they might preach eloquent Platonism from the midst of their boys and baths, and with as much justice as they extolled fortitude and public virtue in their adulations of the despot who ruled them. But why recur so far back to times of scant or uncertain records for the reign of philosophy. We have seen it in our own days. We have seen its effects both on things and on men.”

“We have,” said old La Versière, proudly.

“Not to pursue exactly that path of argument,” interrupted Cornélie, “doth not philosophy ally better with the heroic virtues than religion, which is so exclusive and contemptuous in principle, as to consider every thing as light and supererogatory that doth not make part of itself. Patriotism, I remember, is not once mentioned in its code—”

The curate smiled—



“—Nay, all the heroism recorded in Plutarch would be but vanity in its eyes.”

“And all the heroism of France, from Roland to Bayard, from Henri Quatre to Turenne, not to mention the civilian virtues of De Thou, of D’Aguesseur, De l’Hopital, names that might—will rank with Plutarch’s best—on what was it founded, but religion?”

“The French character,” said Ossian proudly, “made the greater part of their heroism.”

“And then what made that character, my young, patriotic friend,—but it is useless to argue these points. I care not whether truth or untruth allies best with heroism. There is a phenomenon in the world, called religion, to the existence of which we can no more shut our eyes than against the light; its truth stands based on simple, rational proofs, and it should be first seen, whether these proofs can possibly be set aside or slighted, ere we proceed to argue the needlessness of what

forces itself upon us, or the seeming absurdity of its rites and objects. For me to go over those proofs to you were vain, for it is the characteristic of all moral demonstration to lose its force, the instant it loses its novelty. Hence we are obliged to enforce the truth on some by their fears, on others by their hopes—”

La Versière smiled.

“—To you, cold reasoners, I can only urge it by arguments of expediency.”

“And how will those apply at present? Are we not passing happy, contented at least, suffering no ills, not at least that religion can cure, unless you mean that an hypocritical affectation of it would recommend us to the mercy of our enemies.”

“Suspect me of no such thought. Mine are far wide of such, considering merely that your children are entering on the world, that they touch the age of the passions, at which hour the seeds of life's happiness or unhappi-

ness are sown, and that they are without a moral guide to conduct them safely through."

"They have their judgments, and if that fail, their hearts and consciences."

"False as a guide perhaps, and most certainly frail as a support."

"Indeed, M. Thouin, you alarm yourself causelessly in our behalf."

"Would you keep your sons from blood," said Thouin.

La Versière made no reply.

"If you would," continued the pastor, "I warn you, that that morality which can teach no forgiveness of injuries, will not do so, placed as they are, at least, in estrangement and enmity with their brethren."

"Whither doth all this tend?"

"I have given one great argument for the expediency of instilling religion into your offspring, La Versière; and I rejoice to see, it has made its impression. Another I would shew you by asking in what manner you in-

tend your children to gratify their natural passions, and be happy?"

"They are too poor to marry," said the Conventionalist, "and, I hope, too proud to raise up a progeny of beggars."

"Your prudence therefore exposes them to a life of temptation, though with what charm you have armed them against falling into the ways of vice, I cannot conjecture."

"Come, come, we must leave those things to chance."

"Why not say to nature?"

"Well, I will say, to nature."

"The hallowed link of marriage is superstition in your eyes; you have made your enthusiastic son, Ossian, here, condemn that rite, for example, or esteem it necessary but in obedience to the world's prejudice."

"You are not much in the wrong," said the Conventionalist.

"Then you have embittered for him even the sweetest dream of a poet's life."

"May not a pure mind hallow its own conceptions and visions?" asked Ossian.

"Suppose, La Versière, this son of yours had corrupted one of our mountain maidens."

"An unlikely supposition, for the population shun us, even the soft-hearted Ossian included, as vipers."

"Revenge and despite for such injustice might drive him to meditate such an act, as the wolf would snatch a lamb from the jealously guarded sheepfold."

"You injure Ossian by such impossible suppositions."

Ossian turned somewhat pale. It was, however, for Oscar.

The *curé* took M. La Versière aside, and they walked together for the space of nearly an hour. But the subject of their conversation the reader will hereafter be enabled to conjecture.

## CHAPTER VI.

ALTHOUGH imagining the cause that had brought the *curé* from Locle, and had given rise to some trouble, reproof, and exhortation, in the family, it was some days ere I exactly learned it. During that interval indeed I formed the resolution of resuming my peregrinations, but in addition to the usual solicitations of Ossian and his father, Oscar reproached me with having never yet kept my promise of accompanying him upon an expedition amongst the higher Alps in chase of the chamois.

I was desirous of enjoying the novelty of this famed sport, as also of exploring the re-

gion of eternal snows in fuller and more agreeable company than that of a guide, and with some more inspiring motive and excitement than that of beholding the sublime and picturesque. The beauties of Nature are never so gratifying as when they seem to present themselves by chance.—To go absolutely and with pleasure prepense in search of a prospect, makes the feeling which it excites cold and artificial,—it limits the enjoyment to the eye merely, and shuts out that noble accompaniment of thought, which, had one stumbled by chance upon such a scene, could not have been wanting.

Ossian agreed to accompany us. The expedition and the absence of his sons pleased old La Versière, who had reason to expect a visit from Girouette, and who did not wish the fiery spirit of Oscar, nor the sensitive Ossian, to meet the fickle soldier, whom they both looked on with so much suspicion.

We set out, the three of us, for the sons

of the regicide had found it impossible to attach to them even a peasant follower—armed with guns, poles, cords, and cord-ladder, hatchets, provision too, all which formed a burden for each back, that by no means agreed with the breadth or habits of mine.

It was more than a day's journey to the scene of our intended sport, and the brothers spoke frequently, and with some mystery at first, of a chalet where we were to stop and equip ourselves more lightly for the actual fatigue of the chase. As I was bound for the same chalet with them, it became necessary, sooner or later, to let me into the secret of this mystery.

“I dare say, you have conjectured what brought old Thouin amongst us the other day,” said Oscar to me, “or perhaps he told you.”

“Not a word did he mention to me: nor did I allow myself to form conjectures with



respect to what you all seemed to think best concealed."

"Nothing in it to hide—merely a pretty parishioner of M. Thouin's, whom I thought proper to carry away, and he to come to complain of."

"Then he had some reason, methinks."

"Bah! priests have always reason."

"And the mystery of the chalet consists in its containing this young lady."

"Precisely," replied Oscar; "and therefore at this moment dare I not visit it alone. The brother is vigilant and suspects. He hates me, as I do him, and though he durst not cross my path, for if he durst," and Oscar ground his teeth, "but did he know the place of my treasures, he would come by night or in my absence, and steal her from me."

"But how will our company aid you to deceive his vigilance?"

"He will not suspect me of bringing a stranger thither. And three of us, with a

good look out can surely discover if we be watched. If I can espy him lurking, my game is found without a chamois."

"Oscar," said Ossian, "I will leave you here, if you talk so. I know it is but talk. But yet, how bring yourself to say that you would fire upon a fellow man."

"Rather our natural enemy, Ossian. Are we not shunned like beasts of prey—denied friendship, denied approach to the fair ones of our race, whose minds are poisoned against us, whilst these chains subdue and pain us—shall we be marked out like Parrias from our kind, as your favourite book describes\*—and shall not we have our revenge?"

"Better to live like that Parria, Oscar."

"Ah! you may, Ossian. But I have blood in my veins, feelings, passions."

"And nothing to restrain them, Oscar, unhappily."

\* Oscar alluded no doubt to St. Pierre's '*Chaumière Indienne*.'

“Nothing—what should there be to restrain them?”

“Reason, justice, Oscar.”

“And have I not spoken both? Are we not put out of the pale of human kind, and for no crime? Are we not at war with it?”

“Nay, but ours is a peculiar, unnatural situation—we should forgive, and be resigned.”

“And I am to let Paul seize Marie, and bear her from me?”

“Nay, I would defend her without vindictiveness against him, who rightfully seeks to free her.”

“Rightfully—is she not mine—doth she not love me—”

But I must acquaint the reader with the story of Marie more briefly, than the dialogue of the brothers would allow.

She was the daughter of a wealthy landed proprietor, such as in any other country would have assumed the bearing and title of

a gentleman. In that land, however, none soared above the rank of a peasant, except perhaps the ambitious burgesses of the principal towns. The father of Marie had his flocks and herds, which he tended, his mountain-side, domain sufficient for the noble of a more flat and fertile country, his house, decorated externally with paintings, inside with white-wash, his *vacherie*, a score of chalets and of shepherds—a son too, and several daughters, amongst whom he had ample wealth to divide.

Paul, the son, had upon the first coming of the La Versières to the country been the companion of Oscar, whom he led through the Alpine paths around, and initiated in the daring sports of those lofty regions. In these exercises the Swiss youth was soon surpassed by his scholar, and this did not tend to strengthen their mutual amity. Oscar during this time had penetrated to the domestic circle of the Swiss farmer, had seen his daughters

—they were rude, mountain beauties—but love, headstrong as it is after choice, is before it possessed of a very flexible spirit of conformity, and Oscar, to whom the sight or society of Parisian grace was henceforth denied, yielded his heart to the simple fascinations of a Swiss girl. Marie was the object of his choice, nor could she resist the first glance, that bespoke preference and homage, from a youth of Oscar's person and carriage, from one too who wore the manners, and boasted being a native, of the metropolis of France.

What were Oscar's views I know not, nor perhaps did he himself—when a monk from no very distant convent entered one day the house of poor Marie's father. He craved a meal, and repayed the hospitality he received by a full or rather over-full history of the newcomers, or La Versières, who had settled in this part of their country. Revolution, republicanism, regicide, are themes that few talkers at any time can resist expatiating upon ;

and they certainly in the present case supplied the monk with materials for the homily of an hour. Other reports at fair and market respecting the Conventionalist and his family, corroborated the hints and warnings of the mendicant. Oscar in consequence found the gates of the farm shut against him, and was forbidden attempting any future intrusion by the proprietor himself, who, not without some horror at the mere presence of the youth, exorcised him, as it were, from his domicile. When he expostulated, the names of Judas, of assassin, impious brood, and cursed seed, struck first upon his ear, as applied to him, and but that the indignation that swelled within him was merged and mingled in a greater degree of astonishment, he would have been prompted at the instant to some extravagant or fatal act.

Vengeance, however, kept awake in his breast, as did love in that of Marie. So bitter, so absorbing were Oscar's thoughts of re-

sentment, that his affections were overwhelmed by the more powerful passion. True, he still loved Marie, but that was no longer the predominating idea—the thoughts of her beauty, her tenderness, her sufferings, occurred—but not so often as did his own humiliation, her father's insults, her brother's neglect. Had not the pursuit of his love agreed so well with that of vengeance, there is no doubt which he would have sacrificed. As it was, scorning or deeming impracticable the seeking of honourable satisfaction from any of a family, whom he now looked down upon as peasants, how muchsoever in imagination he had been before inclined to consider them above that rank, he resolved to gratify his passion for Marie, and to procure that gratification in a baser way than he at first meditated, in order to take vengeance upon her family.

He succeeded but too well in his selfish project, and at length was compelled to bear

away Marie from her father's roof, lest her situation might reveal their connexion, and expose her to all the fury of her parent. Selfish as his motives were, they were not unmingled, especially of late, with purer feelings, as was evident from his consulting her safety in preference to the vengeance which he had intended to inflict by her shame upon her family. Had he held such a resolution as this, he would have been a demon indeed.—But he was a youth of strong passions, abandoned to them and to himself, the sport of circumstances and of his own mind, incapable of mastering or guiding either—thus, like the higher order of beasts of prey, of mingled tenderness and ferocity, generosity and cruelty, not without seeds of nobleness in a disposition, which seemed formed for its own destruction, as well as for that of all around it, whether friends or foes.

Of Paul, Marie's brother, when Oscar designated him as a sneak, or by some word of



equal value, and when even the equitable Ossian assented to the character, I could not entertain a high opinion, more especially considering, that although suspecting Oscar La Versière, he had yet sought or demanded no open vengeance. But what vengeance could a peasant seek, especially of one unrivalled in agility and strength? M. Thouin had heard the circumstance, and immediately placing his suspicions right, had come to relate the affair to old La Versière, and to expostulate with his son. But all he obtained by his coming was another version of the story, with assurance from the old man, that vengeance could not have been his son's motive, and that when the anger of the family was allayed, Marie should be forthcoming.

“As one of your family,” urged Thouin.

“You must speak to Oscar on that subject,” was the only answer of La Versière.

As the greater part of these circumstances were either revealed to me, or penetrated, dur-

ing our journey to the chase, my veneration for the exile's family, and for Oscar especially, began to abate. "But such," said I, "is the world, shaded characters and mingled motives compose it—to look too close at any corner of life, is to convert the over-curious pryer into a misanthrope. All this may not be so bad as I think it. At any rate, Ossian is pure-minded and noble—and Cornélie, these circumstances will put to the proof what she is."

## CHAPTER VII.

WE proceeded on our mountain path in the mean time, abandoning the pine-crowned summit and ridges of the lesser Alps, and directing our course to where the many tops of their mightier brethren reared themselves above the clouds. It was in the neighbourhood of these, and in a retired valley, or rather, high up on one of the mountains which inclosed the valley, that we found the chalet. It was completely concealed by a projecting rock from the view, and was only reached and discovered on the wide waste of the Alp-side, by a speck of pale-green pasture above it. A wild and

rapid torrent rolled in full sight beneath, shrunk however considerably from its winter course, which we could perceive, as by the help of poles and stones we crossed it, from the wreck of fir-trunks and crumbling rocks, which marked the line of its high-water. Above the chalet far, arose a bald granite brow, seldom bare to the sky as now, and beyond this were descried the ever-during snows of a still loftier Alp.

I had thought the day's toil concluded, when we had reached the mountain-base, and saw the spot which marked the chalet within what seemed an insignificant distance above us. But more than an hour elapsed, and the sun was sinking behind the distant Jura, ere we reached our resting-place.

Marie proved to be a more interesting girl than I had augured. She had a beautiful, simple, mountain face, not the less lovely in my eyes from bearing the marks of care and pining, and approaching motherhood. She

sprung to welcome Oscar, as woman's love alone can welcome; and cried and laughed and sighed upon his bosom with momentary and frantic happiness. Even after a time Oscar vainly chid her forgetfulness of his brother and his friend—she acknowledged no one's presence but his,—would not be calmed, nor could be brought to prepare repast, to think or speak of aught, except his being with her.

The tears started to Ossian's eyes. I turned to look with dry ones down the vale already darkling below with the first gray of night.

The tender fondness of poor Marie, connected with what I knew of Oscar, touched me. Some minutes did I moralize on woman's love and man's unworthiness; yet was not sorry, on awaking from my reflections, to find that an old woman, not so oblivious or absorbed as poor Marie, was spreading cheese and milk and bread upon the rude table of the hut. A portion of kid too appeared soon after invitingly. And in despite of sentiment, we were all,

Marie included, much better and happier after supper than before it.

“What can be Oscar’s intentions respecting this poor girl?” asked I of Ossian, as we walked forth a moment, previous to our retiring for repose.

“He knows not himself,” said Ossian; “my father says, he has acted wrong, and says no more. Cornélie wants to bring her home, and make her one of the family instantly, and it was with difficulty that my father could prevent her setting forth to come here the other day.”

“And why have prevented her?” said I.

“Why, indeed! But we still hold to a world that shakes us off.”

The next morn we rose to prosecute our sport, and quitted the chalet before sun-rise, directing our course over the summit of the mountain. Surmounting it and descending into a bleak valley, if valley a hollow too high even for vegetation can be called, we

reached a glaicer at the foot of the Alp which we intended to climb. The summer's sun had attacked it on every side, and was now beaming on its solid mass, which seemed, like glass, to reflect without being subdued by the powerful ray. Its circumference, however, irregular and elevated from the ground, was dripping on all sides; whilst a full stream emerged from under it, and rolled towards a neighbouring cleft.

A mist, considered most fortunate by Oscar, was shading the lofty peaks and snowy regions above us. It would enable us, he said, to come amidst the game unperceived. Accordingly we still ascended by a weary and awful path, penetrating the chill cloud, which excluded all view of the precipices that might overhang, or undermine us. The experienced eye of Oscar alone prevented us at times from stumbling into huge *crevasses* or clefts in the snow, which at half a foot depth became ice, and which extended down, perfect abysses,

awfully deep and blue. Even when discovered, and when the danger was obviated of thus falling into them unawares, it was no easy task to imitate Oscar's mode of clearing them by a leap upon his pole. Though sometimes they were of breadth so considerable, that we were compelled to follow their brink, until we reached either their termination or a snow-bridge, which might enable us to cross them. One of these we encountered, which proved a very ravine of ice; and we descended into its depths and ascended in the same manner by steps, which the hatchet of Oscar instantaneously formed. It was a novel and no agreeable situation, to find oneself in its depth, chill, blue barriers rising up on each side, and the murky cloud shutting out sky and sun, a fit vaulting for such dungeon.

As we regained the snowy surface of the mountain's side, we emerged from the cloud, which rolled in white voluminous folds beneath us, illuminated by the bright rays of the



morning sun. The valleys below were hidden from our view, whilst the heights of the snowy Alps above lifted themselves up in awful solitude. We could now descry, and we felt awe in doing so, the particular appearance of these unseen and unapproachable summits, the bleached granite peaks, against which the scarcely whiter snow-drifts lay couched—the wide, irregular summit, which to the eye below had seemed a peak, and which now appeared a broad round scalp, with a roll of snow around its ridge, like a fillet or a crown. The sky was no longer of that light, transparent blue, which cheers the upturned looks of men—it was of a deep, blackening, awful hue, and seemed repulsive of the audacious glance, that dared to scan its depths so near. The utter solitude was the most awful of the sensations awakened by the scene, for our steps upon the “crumping snows,” were but those of insects intruding upon such vastness—the elements above were rulers here—the

slightest breath of wind, that shook from their places of rest the light balls of snow and ice, precipitating them down the mountain's side, caused an uproar in our ears,—but still it was slight in such a scene, nor more than was proportioned to the majestic and unechoing stillness of the Alpine realm.

“Nature,” said I, “that has filled each cranny of the globe with life, seems not to have (this momentary intrusion on our part excepted) a solitary representative here.”

“Hush,” said Oscar, “you forget on what errand we came. Look yonder—”

I was answered, on directing my view to a distant, though not one of the most lofty peaks, by descrying an animal upon its very point.

“There,” exclaimed Ossian, “your reflection is twice belied.” A majestic eagle shot down the mountains, not checking his straight, headlong career, till he had passed not many yards above our heads, and then whirling

around us, he screamed and lay hidden behind some projecting point.

"I never was more strongly tempted to forfeit a day's sport for a bird of prey," said Oscar, bringing down his gun, that he had pointed at the eagle.

"Nor I, i'faith," said Ossian; "I never thought they ventured so near the hunter."

"It is a child-devourer, the most savage of the tribe. It is considered ominous, when they do approach so near."

"Hunters and fishermen are always superstitious," said Ossian; "the danger attendant on their pursuit, as well as chance being the chief regulator of their success, furnishes them with omens, vows, and a legion of saints peculiar to them."

Oscar, I thought, looked more angry at the cool remark of his brother than became one professing the philosophic creed of the La Versières.—"Brother," said he, "books and libraries have their laws and influences—the

hills and wild places of the earth have theirs also."

As Ossian smiled, Oscar grew still more angry.

"Come," said I, "Ossian, one of your name and poetic temper might afford more quarter to superstition, especially when she is a mountain deity. I for my part admire and am a follower of her myself, whilst she is a denizen of the hills, inspiring the wild and untaught poor with caution at times, and at times with consolation. There she is a beneficent, a poetic spirit. It is only when haunting the plains of the civilized, the crowded towns of the artizan, and working upon the mean fears of every day life, that she becomes, by a union with ignorance and power, metamorphosed into demon."

"And I tell thee, Ossian, to mock not what you have not experienced. That eagle's cry bodes harm; this evening I will give you leave to mock me."

“I hope, that it does bode harm, at least to a couple of chamois,” said Ossian.

As we marched in pursuit of the game, a sudden gust from below rushed upwards, and penetrating the cloud that still rolled beneath us, made a rent in it, as it were, and opened for us a vista to the valley. This is one of the most lovely phenomena of Alpine scenery. Deep through the vapoury cloud, which rolled and closed gradually round the breach made in its mass, we descried the gay fields and groves, and with some difficulty the torrent below, the sun shining on the depth of the valley, as upon us, whilst the pent of the mountain side that we descried beneath lay under the shadow of the cloud, except where the slanting rays penetrated through the breach.

“Well,” said Ossian, “if ever nature presented a phenomenon that might be construed into an omen, and into a fair omen, that is one.”

"Take it as such then, and be thankful, without entering into a disquisition upon it," said Oscar.

"I have nothing either to hope or fear, and therefore look for no omens.—But, Oscar, thou art very splenetic and churlish this morning."

"And thou, Ossian, wouldst argue under an avalanche, even at the risk of making its mass move down to confute you. And I promise you, our voices, insignificant as they are, Heaven knows, might aid this south wind in bringing down one of these excrescences of snow that overhang us."

He had scarcely spoken, when a quantity of snow detached itself from on high, luckily somewhat in advance of us. It appeared trifling at first, but as it gathered and shook down other masses in its descent, it fell some yards before us, in an impetuous shower, which, although there were no large fragments, none that could dignify the fall with the name

of avalanche, would have sufficed, I have no doubt, to sweep us from our path and from this life together. I would have retreated, but Oscar pointed forward, and we accordingly wended on in a hurried and stealthy pace, silent ourselves as the grave, and breathless as our speed permitted, whilst the fragments of the young avalanche rolled with pattering and awful sound beneath us.

For folks, who are neither soldiers nor adventurers, and therefore unused to these things, it is a disagreeable feeling to know one's life in jeopardy. And this is not in the least abated by its having been the sober, serious reflection of the half hour previous, that there is really nothing in life worth living for. I would recommend as the best antidote to misanthropy, ten minutes' hurried walk beneath the white brows of an impending avalanche. I for my part never felt more philanthropic than after such a trial, more reconciled to human nature, to life, and to all its ills.

We had not long passed, and were sheltered beneath an *aiguille* or lesser peak, when down the monster came. The enormous mass slid a space, perhaps a furlong, sending down before it a shower of loose snow—then like a huge wave, that strikes the shore and leaps into a surge, the avalanche turned over, split, dashed and rolled its mighty volume down. I could not describe it, no more than I could my own sensations, as I saw it strike the path we just had trodden. It swept the very cloud before it into a shower; and the only impediment it encountered was the pine-grove, already shattered by many a fall. The stout firs fell like grass before a mower—the foremost uprooted borne below, and the rest flung prostrate one upon the other, and buried instantly beneath the ruin. The time of its descent allowed me to form an idea of the distance, for it was many, many minutes, ere the fall subsided in the vale, scattering fragments far in its farthest shock—we could perceive the white masses



on the green meads, among the rocks, and on the torrent's brink, the course of which was completely stopped. From above, subsidiary falls took place from time to time, keeping up the mountain thunder so long, that I began to fear that the Alp itself would crumble. It was nearly an hour before we could recover presence of mind to pursue our journey.

We did at length, Ossian saying no more of omens, myself pondering on the past mixture of the awful and sublime, and Oscar, bent on the capture of a chamois, as if naught had happened.

The reader is perhaps aware, that he, with us, is not engaged in the chase of this romantic little animal, after the orthodox, Alpine fashion, which requires dogs, a number of *chasseurs*, and other requisites. But the brothers could command no gathering or suite, and therefore went alone, as we described it, to the chase, a mode both difficult and perilous.

Oscar, however, had seen the game, a prin-

cipal part of success; and we now approached the place, which was certainly as inaccessible and cunning a spot as a chamois could entrench himself in, and as hazardous to the approaches of his enemy. The peak on which the deer had been at first descried hung over an angle, which was the point of junction between two lines of mountains, both most precipitous where they met. Here the animal, with his wonted cunning, placing himself on the summit of the precipice, and fearing no enemy on that side, directs his watch in the other directions from whence he may be approached. A number of hunters would surround and force the deer in its flight to allow at the least some of their party a shot, but the solitary *chasseur* must draw near on the most inaccessible side. Although Oscar was not altogether solitary, he considered himself so, as Ossian was not the most expert of marksmen, and he reckoned me, not judging falsely, as about Ossian's equal.

Consequently ordering Ossian round to the far side, and leaving me at this, Oscar took upon himself to ascend the very face of the precipice, where, with some miles of depth beneath him.—I shudder at this moment to think upon it.

Allowing sufficient time for Ossian to have accomplished his circuitous path, Oscar commenced his perilous clambering, in which a false step would have precipitated him to certain death, and in which even a loosened and falling fragment would have scared the game. Trembling myself far more than he did, I watched his progress, gathering confidence from the caution, activity, and presence of mind which he evinced, more intent indeed upon him than upon the deer, which I was set to watch. I turned my eyes at times, however, to my duty, and could perceive the chamois browsing, most probably on the mountain moss that could alone grow in that wintry region, its side discovered towards the precipice,

whilst its sharp eye was bent in the opposite direction.

At length I saw the youth pause on a projecting piece of rock, not more than broad enough for his feet, whilst not a shrub was there to allow his hand to stay his footing. I thought of the precipice beneath him, and again shuddered. How can he resist in that position the repercussion of the gun? He levelled it, however, and fired. The chamois fell. Another shot was heard—no doubt 'twas Ossian's. And still another followed. Our pieces were single-barrelled. The shots were all too loud for an echo. I looked at my own; 'twas yet undischarged—I turned towards Oscar. He slid from his position, and from my sight at the same time; and whether 'twas a voluntary movement on his part, or that a dizziness or stun occasioned by the shot had shaken him from his frail footing, I could not tell.

His shout, however, was heard at the instant,

not a shriek, or sound of fright; and I felt reassured, as I rushed towards the precipice. On looking down, Oscar was upright, bounding from rock to rock, and ledge to ledge, with the force and impetuosity of a supernatural being. Another figure fled from him. This no doubt was the person who had fired the third shot, and perhaps as an intruder, he had excited the vengeance of Oscar.—But Heavens, what a path for flight!—What, for pursuit!—Each step taken with safety was a miracle for each.

Oscar gained upon his prey, for such the fugitive seemed, they both approached the last ledge or shelf of rock, the summit of a kind of natural abutment, past which a step was inevitable destruction, for thence downward the rock sunk precipitating, and left not a resting-place for a straw. The fugitive reached it, and paused an instant,—I could not help clasping the cliff, on which I leaned, with intense anxiety: I felt as if I had been my-

self in the same perilous situation with them.

Oscar seemed to have no such thought for himself, no such commiseration for him who fled. As the latter turned in suspense, Oscar reached the same ledge, and, either by the impulse of his coming, or by deliberate violence (the will at any rate did not appear to be wanting), the hapless fugitive was precipitated from the fatal ledge. A commenced shriek, for the break seemed wanting to complete it, came at the first plunge from the body—for it was no more. It fell shattered and mangled, staining the snow in its descent, down, down—Oh! that a lake had closed upon it, and spared my imagination the horrid sight that often haunts it, of that hapless form rolling, striking, and finally separating, till the fragments were lost in the fearful depth and distance.

I felt Ossian at my side, and started from a momentary stupor.

“You have seen it,” cried I.

"All, all," whispered he, "the fearful sight. But we must save my brother."

"Who is it? what is it?" demanded I.

"It must have been Paul," replied he.

"Paul—what! Marie's brother?"

"The same. No other would have fired at Oscar."

"Ha! and his was the third shot, and at Oscar."

"I saw him level—he waited for Oscar to discharge his piece, that he might 'scape, and then fired."

"Is Oscar wounded?"

"'Tis what we must see. He must be, he must be so. Look, he lies motionless upon the ledge—my brother, he is dead."

Ossian cast aside his gun, as he spoke, and rushed down the precipice with the same supernatural fearlessness, though from a very different cause, as that which had impelled Oscar. I dared not follow, able to do naught save gaze after him. In the same security,

though not with equal speed, Ossian at length gained the ledge where Paul had been precipitated. He raised up Oscar, who was wounded, and bled profusely. The youth then called to me, to throw down ropes, and otherwise assist in raising up the wounded Oscar to the summit of the precipice. It was a task of difficulty and fear. The youth was almost unable to help himself; we dragged him, I may say, unaided, and at times he was suspended over the same precipice, down which the unfortunate Paul had fallen to destruction, supported only by a frayed rope, and the doubtful strength of Ossian and myself.

At length we had safely drawn him upon the snowy surface above, and upon examination we found that he had been shot in the right shoulder, not dangerously. The sight of the wound rejoiced me—he, who had perished, did make an attempt on the life of Oscar, and paid the forfeit of his base attempt.



We asked Oscar, who it had been. He confirmed Ossian's conjecture, and answered, "That villain, Paul."

"Oscar, he is no more."

"By a coward's and an assassin's fate."

"Ah! brother, may we never have such cause for vengeance."

Oscar looked with an angry frown, but could no longer reply.

We bore him, before evening-fall, to the chalet of Marie.

## CHAPTER VIII.

I KNOW not what account of the adventure they gave to Marie—it was not, however, the truth. She, poor girl, was agitated and distracted much by even what she beheld, by the blood of Oscar, his weakness, and our anxious looks. To this we delayed to add the overwhelming tidings of her brother's fate.

My first words in private to Ossian were of the necessity of procuring some medical aid. But he pleaded the utter impossibility of procuring any, as well as the needlessness, he hoped, of having recourse to it. There were other points of consideration of greater mo-

ment, but all thoughts we deferred for the night.

Betaking ourselves to a few hours' repose, Ossian and myself started at the early dawn to return home. Oscar slept, and betrayed no dangerous symptoms; and we descended the mountains, leaving him to the care of Marie and her attendant.

We spoke little during our rapid journey; and scarcely alluded either of us to the catastrophe of the preceding day. Remarks upon our path, upon the rapidity with which we had traversed what part of it was past, and in what time we might accomplish the remainder, formed our only, interrupted conversation. It was not more than three at noon, when Ossian approached his home. None came to welcome him; our return was not so soon expected. And when Cornélie espied us, her mind instantly augured a misfortune.

La Versière came too. Ossian unburdened himself of the circumstances of the story.

The old man seemed more moved than his daughter. She was not hardened to the melancholy fate of Paul, nor blind to the wrong that had given rise to his vengeance, but she deemed the catastrophe not unmerited by the base means which he adopted of wreaking that vengeance. She contemplated the deed and the misfortune. But her father eyed at once the consequences, was less moved perhaps than any of us, but far more alarmed.

He shut himself up for some time, and left us to our melancholy debate, or as melancholy silence. At length he came forth, having decided that it was best to hush up the circumstance, say nought of it to any, and bury even the remembrance of it, if that were possible.

This determination, on the part of their father, astonished and displeased both Cornélie and Ossian—to me it was still more unwelcome. Paul would be missing, on whom would the suspicion fall, save upon his only

known enemy? But the old man upheld, that shame for his sister's *enlevement* and disgrace was cause sufficient for his disappearance; and that for a long time he must be considered absent principally in search of her. The remains might be found, 'twas urged. This he declared unlikely in that wild region, where moreover many hunters, strangers even to the country, yearly perished, and to identify the remains of one precipitated such a depth, would prove as impossible, as to light on them was improbable.

But what were the advantages of concealment?—That, were it disclosed, none would credit the whole truth—that it would be infallibly believed, that with or without a struggle Oscar had overcome the youth who rightfully sought vengeance, and that he had sacrificed him to his evil passions. Marked out for destruction by the rulers of a neighbouring country, whose known hatred could not fail to influence the local government, within whose

jurisdiction the region lay, it was impossible that either in the court of justice, or in that of public opinion, one of the Regicide's family would be judged fairly or impartially.

"Let us, as well as Oscar, trust to an upright conscience," said Cornélie proudly, "speak all, and fear nothing."

Ossian seconded her proposal. But the old Conventionalist had been too much accustomed to the wily ways of the revolution, and depended so totally on that address and cunning, which the men of that epoch always did, and do still continue to pride themselves in, that he closed our mouths, and forbade all utterance of the fatal subject. Thus the fact, which, if told openly, had lost much of the suspicious and the horrible, gathered for all of us in the foul closeness of secrecy the taint and odour of crime.

I myself did not fail to expostulate; but to take upon me the consequences of open confession I could not, fatal as they might prove to

this hospitable family. To abandon them and the country also occurred to me—but I found myself unable to make what they must consider as so selfish and ungenerous a proposal at such a moment. Poor Cornélie! her noble and generous spirit shone forth in that hour of trial—*her* reasonings dissuaded us from any rash resolution—*her* countenance inspired all, even her father, with firmness—her anxiety was preserved for her hours of solitude. I thought how displaced she was on this low and degraded state of existence. Her breast should have supported the head of some drooping hero or despairing statesman. Man would have gathered fortitude in gazing upon her, and lessons of virtue were written on her brow. Had she been in the place of a Roland, or De Stael, cast upon those times, when an overthrow of prejudice and a fresh spring of enthusiasm had levelled all rank, save that of talent, in society, and allowed even women to appear on the stage of history, then would her

mind have been felt in matters worthy of its influence and agency, and her fate, whether of pride or of misfortune, had then been such as became her nature. As it was, cursed with an unworthy lover, a parent whom she adored, but all whose disappointments had naturally risen from petty, selfish, and mistaken ambitions, with brothers for whom no prospects opened, except such troubles as their idleness and passions promised, her high enthusiasm served to weigh upon her, instead of bearing her up,—her large-mindedness obstructed her happiness and content in the narrow space allowed for its developement, and every nobler instinct of her nature proved a source of sorrow and disappointment.

Ossian and his father had returned almost immediately to the chalet, with such medicines and necessaries, as were deemed requisite. It was with much difficulty that Cornélie was restrained from accompanying them ;—as for me, I was too weary to again encounter the



fatigue. And thus the daughter of the mansion, and myself its guest, were left to each other's company, an awkward circumstance even in that region where etiquette had little penetrated. In the distraction and hurry of the moment, however, this circumstance was contemplated by no one, not even by Cornélie and myself, I believe, until we met with mournful faces in the solitary salon.

With my English ideas of propriety clinging to me, I felt somewhat embarrassed at my situation, and was even meditating a visit to the *curé*, when Cornélie, too full of serious thought to dwell for a moment on such trifles, at once burst forth on the subject that absorbed her.

"Poor Marie!" exclaimed she, "I wish I had gone—a female, even though a stranger, would have comforted her—and yet 'tis of no use, till Oscar can bear removal, then will I go and bring her here, to ours, to Oscar's home. I will overcome my father's prejudices—they are unworthy of him."

“ It is prudential motives, not prejudice, Cornélie, that weighs with your father,” said I.

“ And why? Is not the union between Oscar and Marie as sacred, as if the little watch-maker, the mayor of the neighbouring town, had given it his sanction.”

“ Quite so to me, who am no admirer of marriage as a civil contract.”

“ Why be dissatisfied with it as such?”

“ For such reasons as our present conversation suggests, that it does not sufficiently mark the difference betwixt the connexions of virtuous love, and those of vice, of vanity, and momentary passion.”

“ Methinks, however, that it does so. Sins against society are thus marked by social reprobation. I see no need of enforcing such laws by the denunciations and menaces of religion?”

“ Are not these more powerful?”

“ More severe, I grant you; and, like all severe codes, necessarily inefficient. Look at all coun-

tries where the threats and promises of religion are construed and believed according to the letter, they are the most dissolute in Europe. In those others, as in your own, where, if I am rightly informed, although religion is mildly professed, honour is allowed to be the universal motive of action, and guide in principle, virtue pervades private life. No, Sir, the ceremony is nothing, it needs neither pomp nor superstition. The social respect with which it is regarded, hallows it sufficiently."

"I regret," said I, "that you always look at religion on the unamiable side. Setting its proofs apart, I cannot conceive, how a woman should fail to prefer it to all systems of ethics; its distinguishing characteristic being to suit the wants and weaknesses of the heart, to ally with the feelings, to be capable of being identified with them, so as to elevate, to purify, to follow them. A cold and finely-reasoned system of morality may conduct a man through many trying scenes of life, may direct his steps and bear him upright through moments

when self and honesty were at variance—but for a woman, and a woman's heart, for passion, for affection, for love, there is but one creed, one thought that can hallow and console.—”

Cornélie looked impatient.

“ Think only of the state of woman,” urged I, “ in classic and heathen times ?”

“ Nay,” said she, “ tempt not Cornélie to that topic of discussion. I should be wild and warm, and should allow too much advantage to a sophist like yourself.”

“ A sophist ?”

“ I know of one charm at least, independent of that recommended and preached by you, which consoles the heart, and hallows at least its misplaced or unfortunate affections.—And that is self-denial, self-oblivion.” Cornélie leaned her head upon her hand, evidently wanting this very self-oblivion, the effects of which she boasted.

“ It is a melancholy consolation,” said I, “ to forget.”

“ And a common-place one—but you mis-

take, by self-oblivion I meant not forgetfulness. That I do not wish for. With a bleak future, what should one do without a past to dwell on, let that have been ever so sad."

"We can make the future what we will."

"We cannot make it sun shine, if the past o'ershadow it."

"But we have wandered from our argument."

"So let us. The pleasure of society is to converse, not argue."

There was here a pause in our dialogue, from which we were further and finally diverted by the unusual sound of horse's steps upon the little avenue. We had not heard the gates unclosed, and the noise had scarcely reached our ears, when horse and horseman crossed the window in our view.

Cornélie grew very red, and straight after as pale.

The Cavalier's was a handsome, martial figure. He entered, Cornélie hesitated. A

struggle of many thoughts and feelings passed within her mind, and paralyzed all motion. But the frank soldier seized his welcome, kissed both the pale cheeks of Cornélie, sate down beside her, masked his own emotion, if he felt any, and dissipated hers with questions, tidings, gay remarks, ejaculations. In a few moments he had set all present at ease, except himself, as I knew by the glance which he cast at me, as soon as our recovery from astonishment and dumbness gave respite to his volubility.

This was Colonel Girouette.

It is extremely unpleasant to be the bodkin or third person between a pair of lovers, but it is doubly absurd and disagreeable for a careless, heart-whole, decided bachelor to find himself, in addition to the above awkwardness, the innocent object of jealousy and suspicion to the hot-brained suitor. To be suspected at all of such a sentiment is an insult to the dignified apathy of the character, and to be sus-

pected in order merely to be maltreated, and to obtain the subsequent character of a silly pretender discarded, is the very acme of torment and vexation. What is a man to do? If he looks grave, there seems to be reason in the thing, and the affair becomes tragic. If he smiles—it is the natural *ruse*, and exasperation is pre-excited. If he expostulates, he is disbelieved—if he good-humouredly and ironically assents, he is believed.—In short, jealousy excited must have an object to vent itself upon, and even when convinced of its own vanity, must still rage for the sake of consistency, and to preserve its own character as a rational passion. I knew not what to do. The spark of suspicion had fallen, the flame was awakened. Each word and gesture, however warily spoken or artfully chosen, would be as likely to fan as to extinguish it. I wished myself, at the chalet—at the *curé's*. I was at sea, and longed for a spot of dry land,—“long heath, brown furze, any thing.”

“And your father, Cornélie,” said Girouette, “Ossian and Oscar, where are they?”

“Oscar lies hurt in the mountains, owing to an accident which he met with in hunting. My father and Ossian have gone to see him.”

“And—”

“Monsieur, allow me to introduce, &c.—a friend of M. Thouin’s—he was with Oscar when the accident happened.”

“Pray, Sir, what was it?”

“A shot,” said I.

“And a fall,” said Cornélie.

There was a pause.

“Two concise causes,” said the Colonel, “but quite sufficient to lay up one man. Monsieur is a stranger in these parts?”

“Altogether so, until a visit of many weeks with my friends here has rendered me as much acquainted with its beautiful scenery, as I can well be.”

“Delightful country, highly delightful; I



do not wonder that its attractions have detained you so long."

"I need not say, that the family of this mansion have been to me its chief attraction."

"Indeed. I begin to regret my abrupt arrival."

"How should that be? I, for my part, was longing for the coming of a third person: Oscar's accident, and my fatigue in assisting him, having, awkwardly enough, left me the task of keeping up the spirits of Mademoiselle Cornélie."

"The task."

"And a troublesome one—she is most sadly given."

"And my English friend," said Cornélie, rallying, "in order to inspire me with mirth, was treating me with a most serious disquisition on——"

"On what, pray," said Girouette, keenly.

"*Ma foi*," replied Cornélie, smiling and

blushing, "I do believe it was upon marriage."

I was somewhat shaken from my own presence of mind by the young lady's awkward frankness, and looked, no doubt, most foolishly guilty, as the Colonel observed, "That there could not be a more interesting topic for a *tête-à-tête*, and certainly not one better calculated to have effect upon the drooping spirits of a lady."

"There has been too much of this," said Cornélie, rising, and quitting the apartment.

I never met a more frank, gay, fascinating fellow than was Girouette. Half an hour spent in his company solved for me satisfactorily the enigma, which previously I was quite unable to comprehend, of such a woman as Cornélie remaining attached to a man, that had shewn so many signs of fickleness and self. But mere man as he was, in the most worldly of senses, he pleaded guilty to it in a tone so

good-humoured, and confessed his very worthlessness in a style so generous and noble, that if the hearer believed him guilty of such pettiness, he could not help believing at the same time all men, even the best, capable of the same. He enhanced himself, not by elevating himself above his fellows, but by degrading them to a level with himself. I had observed such heroic characters in fiction, framed upon the same principle—but then they had always a touch of the tragic, and told even of their failings “in Cambyzes’ vein”—whilst Girouette wore all his imperfections in the comic sock, not the buskin—and even when he sported with the feelings which he possessed, and that intensely, it was by no means in ironic derision of them—there was none of the affectation or exaggeration of romance about him.

When Cornélie left us together, he neither *cut* nor insulted me—the least that I might have expected from a dragoon of rank—but merely spoke forth his suspicions in as few

and as plain words as possible, which I answered with more circumlocution, but all as simply. We were very great friends—at least so I thought—in ten minutes.

After an absence of little more than that time, Cornélie returned, armed with a colder air than she had been able to assume in the flurry occasioned by her lover's arrival.

"I am so sorry, Colonel Girouette, to be the only one of the family at home to welcome you. But this accident—It is the more awkward, as you gave my father reason to expect you."

"Your father—did not I give the fair Cornélie reason also?"

"Reasons, Colonel," said Cornélie tartly, "are a supply, which you abound in, and are lavish of. But in truth I had long ceased to expect you."

"A soldier's time and motions, fair mistress, are not his own. They are his k— his country's."

"Be not ashamed to mention the name of your royal master, even to a republican's daughter. Under a constitutional King, I too would be a royalist, if he would permit me. And yet, just as is his cause, and equitable as may be his reign, it took me some time, ere I could regard his rule with a subject's fealty."

"You do then at last—you delight me."

"Ay, *at last*, which only differs from *at first* by a certain degree of sincerity."

"Still ferocious" (*farouche*, the word is untranslatable) "on our ancient subject of dispute. It is time that question were at rest. I can assure you, all the world, save yourself, has forgotten it."

"And the great cause also."

"What—Napoleon—ay, truly, he is in the purgatory of heroism, oblivion."

"And, I believe," said I, anticipating any remarks of the kind, which, as an Englishman, I always love better to speak than listen

to, "his gaoler makes it a true purgatory for him."

"I pray you, Sir, not to name that controller of foul linen," said Girouette, "——, those Saint Helena paragraphs have almost re-made me a Bonapartist."

"The persecution of the mighty captive must have refreshed his party."

"Given life to one already extinct. All that his fame wanted was martyrdom. I hope sincerely, those English gentlemen will poison him."

"Poison, Colonel Girouette," said I, "I fervently hope not."

"——, they *shall* though."

"Shall, how?"

"Simply, that we are determined to give them credit for it, whether or not they be kind enough to attempt it."

"Suppose you could even bribe them to it, where's the point gained?"

"Why, that we should have a military

saint, and a potent rallying-word—an acorn, Sir, that might spring up to overshadow the empire. France has grown sadly civilian of a sudden, moustaches are out of fashion—the aproned *negociant* begins to think that he can do without us, so doth the embroidered marquis, that jostles us at court:—the representative supersedes the officer, the tribune the field of battle—and, in short, without the reaction of a party, at least the mock-organization of one, we *militaires* shall soon be nothing.”

The Colonel seemed to pride himself upon the acuteness of his party views, and evidently the character he was most ambitious of was that of an *intrigant*. I thought it pity, that he did not reserve his subtle opinions in political matters for the ex-conventionalist. On me, amusing as they were, they were thrown away. In Cornélie they evidently excited deep disgust. Still Girouette rattled on,

treating the subject as lightly as if it were mere scandal or a disquisition upon taste, nor once pausing, as a British gallant would and must have done, to consider lest his conversation should grow too profound for the ears of our fair companion. These are questions, however, that need never interrupt discourse in foreign life, where neither years nor small-clothes are deemed, as with us, requisite for the attainment of political, and other knowledge equally grave.

Girouette had another motive for his present loquacity. This was the sullen humour with which Cornélie received him, and which seemed to tinge every reply and observation of hers with bitterness. Conversation, he knew, carried on in this spirit would infallibly tend to augment the difference, and could but increase exacerbation. He therefore kept it altogether in his own hands, left neither Cornélie nor myself room for more than a mono-



syllable, and thus by a kind of gay and varied monologue, he contrived to make the evening pass in good-humour and harmony, although of his two companions one was very dull, and the other in the least amiable of tempers.

## CHAPTER IX.

WHEN I arose the next morning, at a much later hour than usual, owing to the fatigue of the preceding days, I found that Girouette and Cornélie had had a long and stormy *tête-à-tête*. The prudent father's presence, which had in late interviews calmed the indignant pride and moderated the high and hot feelings of his daughter, was now unluckily wanting. And Girouette, accustomed to glide with success through a gay, thoughtless, conforming world, was irritated by reproaches cast upon him for want of that heroism and consistency, which he deemed absurd. His political feelings or conduct were not those certainly which

most excited the lady's indignation and contempt—but it was to those only that she confined her reproaches—she disdained to accuse that fickleness and time-serving spirit in his private feelings, of which her happiness had been the sacrifice.

He had not encountered from her such pertinacity and coldness before—and the chill struck more powerfully upon him for being unexpected. In fact, his coming had been the termination of a long debate and struggle within him, between honour and love pretty equally mingled on the one hand, and ambition on the other. Love had carried the day victoriously, but not without a struggle, and one of the great supports and pleasures attending his final resolution was the consciousness of acting, in despite of certain sacrifices, what was right and honourable. Now, it cut all at once his self-complacency to the quick, to find that he was penetrated, fathomed, the mean workings of his selfish soul

read, himself humbled and contemned. Cornélie La Versière was not the being, that in absence he had flattered himself by imagining. In the arrogance of solitary meditation or plans, we are most apt to under-rate our fellow actors in the scene we contemplate. Girouette had looked on Cornélie as a fond, simple creature, whom his address could *mystify*, to use his own expression,—whom he could make happy by deceit, and with less than a whole heart.

He came in the pride of his cunning, in the strength of his worldly intercourse and knowledge of mankind. And certainly his voluble gaiety was irresistible at first—it silenced Cornélie—it even won somewhat upon her dislike—and perhaps the continued presence of a third person would have afforded his fascinations time and scope to have had effect. But when they met alone—when no witness checked the feelings of Cornélie, in the full utterance of them—then, as ever, address was

baffled by simplicity,—the shallow sincerity, which the worst and weakest put on at times under the influence of an excited resolution, was penetrated and exposed by that which knows no change—the little mind of the intriguer lay unmasked and awed before hers, great in its unity of purpose and thought. Defeated, discovered in all his wiles, Girouette retreated to frankness, to confession, covering meanness with mirth, and self with the false heroism of worldliness. But neither did this avail; the trenchant reproof of want of honesty, both in word and thought, went through all such vain guards. The man was humbled. This was all he gained by the interview, the event of which he had looked upon as too certain, to anticipate or think of it as a triumph.

It was one of those lessons, which, if any thing can reclaim a corrupt heart, they will. De Stael says somewhere, “He, whom we love, is the avenger on earth of all the crimes

we commit. The Divinity lends him his power"—and that, she might have added, not only for castigation and vengeance, but also for correction.

In addition to thus punishing and cutting down the meanly-founded pride of her lover, and at the same time gratifying her own more honest portion of the feeling, Cornélie, had she been the most artful of coquettes, could not have chosen a more effectual mode of regaining as well as reclaiming a fickle, though not altogether a false heart. In his first bitter humiliation he retired to solitude with the determination of at once departing and no more reverting thought or step towards the threshold of La Versière, and in the bitter, though not less buoyant gaiety, which disappointment, in common with other excitements, gives birth to, Girouette congratulated himself upon an escape so little hoped for, and an extrication at once from trammels that tortured his heart and crossed his ambition. But as his spirits

subsided, and that sadness followed, which is so favourable to recollection, and when in consequence the images and associations connected with this, his early and first attachment, came over his memory—mortified too, and sick as he had been rendered of the selfishness and cunning, of which he had just seen a proof of the inefficacy, his old impressions recurred in full and irresistible force. He recalled *Cornélie*, the simple, enthusiastic girl, that had first won his heart—in womanhood her early virtues, as well as her charms, were now perfected—whilst his gleams of high spirit, and ardent patriotism had been obscured and lost, scarcely betraying a glimmer, except in such a moment of roused thought as then, to mark their having ever existed. How should he now recover that pride of spirit, which he once promised himself to hold? How relume that heroism within him, which mingling with the world had quenched, and which burned alone, to his discernment, in the breast

of the old Conventionalist's daughter? It could only be regained by cherishing his affection for that noble female.

Such were the reflections of his morning's walk, such his last conclusion. And he was right in more senses than he thought of—his maxim was just, even in the abstract.—Our first affections, if wisely and worthily bestowed, are the true Palladium of virtue. With them we are impregnable. Ungarrisoned by them, we are open to all baseness. For when love (by which I mean the early, first, and pure) abandons the young heart, self is sure to enter and take possession.

I encountered the Colonel in his walk, flushed by these thoughts. We conversed. I could scarcely believe it was the same man, so changed, so earnest were both his tone and subject.

"Almighty Love," thought I, "thou canst transform," &c.

"You are a happy, serious, thinking people,"



said he to me, "I wish I were an Englishman."

I could not avoid smiling at the ludicrous fickleness and abruptness of the sentiment. Which I may account for by remarking, that in common with other young Frenchmen, Girouette had two modes of knowing England and its national character, both of which, though as contradictory as opposites can well be, he nevertheless had studied, and he believed both, there too, in common with his countrymen, inclining to one or the other according as it was his whim to bless or curse, to envy or to hate us.

One draft of our character, one section of us, as an architect would say, he had seen in the diatribes of the *Moniteur* under the Imperial regime:—in this we were perfidious, machiavelian, avaricious, starving, slaves, narrow, barbarous, &c. And as an exaggerated picture is always supplied in justice with one of another extreme as a contrast, this he had

contemplated in the Lord Bomston of Rousseau's "Heloise," where, as the reader knows, we are represented very Grandisons, and *philanthropes par excellence*. Now, Girouette was at present very much dissatisfied with himself, and with his country, and being in a romantic turn of mind, the "Heloise," and its super-excellent Lord with the barbarous name naturally occurred to him, and produced the unpatriotic remark, which I have set down.

"I am sorry to hear you say so," replied I, "a man must have some time quarrelled with himself, ere his discontent swells into a dislike for his country. There is but one degree farther, to which bitterness may reach."

"What may that be, pray?"

"Misanthropy."

"Now you mention it," said he, relapsing into his usual tone of half-serious, half-trifling, "I think I do feel considerably misanthropic. Even your appearance just now was disagreeable to me, and had not my habitual good

manners come to my aid, I should have been almost tempted to quarrel with you."

"You're bilious, my good Colonel; consult a physician."

"Thou shalt be he—what say you to my pulse?" asked he, stretching forth his arm.

"Nay—the physiognomy alone is sufficient to supply the moral physician with symptoms."

"And what saith my countenance. 'Tis a frank one, I have heard, but of few words, for in truth it saith little."

"Much, Sir, on the contrary, much. It telleth at this moment more than I could well collect—love, pride, vexation. The eyes tell one, the brow another, and many a quivering muscle tells the third."

"What more, Sir—you deserve a conjuror's fee?"

"That flush bespeaks a new train of thought—that lip, unnaturally compressed, a resolution not habitual to a fickle humour."

“’Sdeath ! Sir, what necromancer are you ?”

“ One of Lavater’s followers, even of that Swiss philosopher, whom ye slew at Zurich.”

“ He perished no doubt like another Archimedes, while studying the physiognomy of Massena. But where’s your remedy for this sad complication of ills ?”

“ I have been summoned late with my advice. Another and more powerful physician has ministered the proper drug.”

“ And what may that have been ?”

“ Let the physician speak for herself, if you durst question her.”

As I spoke, Cornélie appeared.

“ What a lovely being, such a queen-like gait—there must be a sublime air amongst these hills, that communicates itself to beauty—she is wonderfully changed and improved, Cornélie La Versière,—is she not ? But you have not known her long.”

“ Yet you must have seen her, Colonel, in

the rich saloon, in the queen of cities, Paris, rivalling its proudest fair."

"No more to the Cornélie of this Swiss solitude, than Montmartre is to yon Alp."

"True—the lonely bird hath ever the sweetest note, and the solitary star of evening hath a hundred vows and eyes directed towards it, for every one that coldly admires the galaxy of a crowded heaven."

"You put me in mind of Ossian, who pesters one with similes—it is not that—'tis that the mind really expands in solitude, especially of such noble scenes, and acquires, as hers hath done, a wilder and more independent spirit."

The lady now joined us: and the glance of the soldier quailed to that of the maiden.

"We were even speaking of you," said Girouette.

"Indeed—what words had ye to expend?"

"We were comparing the Cornélie of society, of the metropolis, to her who is the exile's daughter."

"I thought, Colonel, that you had some time since discovered the difference."

"Never till this moment, Cornélie."

"I cannot believe your discernment so tardy. Have you never perceived corruption in the exile's blood, or a certain atmosphere around the dwelling of the old revolutionist, most pernicious and blighting to modern ambition. Are we not altogether past, and out of the mode, this coiffure, as well as the dearest feelings of this heart? Changed, say you—you are right indeed."

"He were a cold and selfish wretch, whose thoughts were these."

"Are they not yours?"

"No, by mine honour."

"Answer as frankly, have they never been?"

The soldier hesitated. Her searching eye was upon him. "If they have ever intruded for an instant, more worthy thoughts have soon chased them away."

“ Ah! that *instant*, and that *soon*.”—I turned from them, down the garden walk.

“ Pardon, then, dear Cornélie,” said the soldier, sinking on one knee, “ I have confessed the worst, more even than the truth, in hopes of mitigating your anger. I am repentant and swear eternal truth.”

“ Think you then, good Sir, that you have but to swear in order to be believed, or that bringing one knee to earth is punishment sufficient to my vengeance. Or that even if I did believe that for the moment you were sincere, I should promise more than to forgive and to—forget.

“ Oh—this is too much—you are cruel, unreasonable—”

I heard no more, until returning, as my steps again brought me near to them.

“ My sentiments changed,” said Cornélie, repeating no doubt a question of his ; “ they are—that is, they are not changed, but obliterated. I care for none beyond my family—

and if my affections are ever to extend beyond that circle, they are yet to be awakened."

" 'Tis well, Mademoiselle."

"Or re-awakened," said the lady. "But, as I said, more urgent business presses than these arguments."

"Business, of what urgent kind can these solitudes afford? The vintage—but that may be left to ruder hands."

" 'Tis neither agricultural nor household business, Colonel—but some that requires my absence upon a distant ride. My father and Ossian will be home before evening, and I myself ere that.—You cannot lack amusement."

"Surely I can accompany you."

"Impossible—that cannot be."

"You will require some attendant in those wild, mountain paths."

"Monsieur," replied Cornélie, turning to me, who had by that time approached, "will be kind enough to accompany me."

"At your command."



“Am I to consider this as vengeance, Cornélie?”

“As whim, if you so wish it.”

“Then I may turn my horse’s head towards Strasbourg—.”

“You had better tarry to see my father, and repose yourself and steed at least one day.”

“Repose, indeed,” cried the Colonel in no calm tone, “when woman’s hand pours the opiate.”

## CHAPTER X.

I OBEYED the young lady, silent and obsequious as a mute, and all as ignorant whither her command tended. The jealousy of Girouette was of course re-awakened, and his anger, right well pleased, as such passion always is, to find itself converted into vengeance by having an object offered to it, already vented itself upon me in frowns and scintillating glances. He gave us to understand in parting that he remained for my sake, as much as for the lady's ; and, uninfluenced as I was, by any of the pugnacious passions of love, jealousy, or resentment, I felt the conveyed hint to be no compliment.

Our horses had some time quitted the pine-encircled mansion of the exile, as well as the subjacent village, ere I recovered from my astonishment, and requested of Cornélie some explanation of her conduct, of this journey, and of the necessity of its being unshared by Colonel Girouette.

“ You have not guessed then what my purpose is ?”

“ To visit Oscar.”

“ No—I go to speak with the father of Marie.”

“ And of Paul.”

“ Even so. But of Paul's fate he cannot yet be certain. And if I can in the mean time reconcile him to Marie, and assure him that she shall make one of our family, the heavy ills, with which misfortune has visited him, will be alleviated.”

“ Are you certain that Oscar, that your father will——”

“ They must, they shall. In this cause of

right, and of rendering the consolation that we trebly owe to this unhappy father, I *will* prevail."

I thought that little good consequences could ensue from this journey, and interview with an exasperated man. "The first preliminary must be to confess your brother guilty of the one crime at least," said I, "and who can tell how the old man will bear the tidings, the confirmation of what he suspected, coming too from your mouth. His passion may vent itself in some way even hazardous to you. Insult at least you must expect, and for what object is all this hazarded?"

"Nay," said Cornélie, "it is we who have first wronged, and must first risk. I will throw myself upon the old man, will talk to him, will beseech him, to forgive his daughter, and her lover."

"But you know not how deep may be his prejudices."

"The greater shall be my patience, the more

perseverant my entreaties. I am but a woman, and an unhappy one—he cannot see in me a fiend.”

“He may have learned the fate of Paul, and by the hand of whom?”

“Then ’twill be but the one task to appease his resentment on all accounts,—to inform him of the whole truth, which he certainly will not have heard. And my father’s ill-judged plan of concealment will so be done away with.—I am determined—there is no use in your attempts to dissuade. You have hitherto evinced friendship for us, and will not in this instance permit me to be badly insulted.”

“As far as my arm and devotion can serve you, lady, count upon it. Yet I wish Colonel Girouette had been allowed to accompany us, as much for his peace as for our safety.”

“What Girouette knows, Paris knows. And my father would be outrageous, if he thought the Colonel acquainted with this unfortunate

connexion, or more unfortunate homicide of Oscar's. It were impossible to tell him."

"Nay, but your cruelty was extreme."

"Be not so lavish of your sympathy, as to bestow it upon Colonel Girouette. He is so profoundly selfish, that man, that whatever may be his sufferings, he will surely extract some gratification from them, either in the way of his interest or his vanity. I have known him to evince the keenest sensibility one moment, to boast of his feelings the second, and the third to turn them into derision, and in all he was sincere."

I smiled at such depth and penetration, especially in a character of *great traits*, if I may use the expression. For the penetration and knowledge of their fellows, possessed by some men to an eminent degree, springs chiefly from their self-knowledge, and their similarity in petty motives to the brethren, whom they read so truly.

She continued, "He pretends to consider

you as the occasion of this, and to transfer the grudge to you."

"He honours me, more than he doth Cornélie La Versière."

"There is the true Englishman, stiff and courteous, as an old Spaniard, when it behoves him to speak gallant."

"Ah! Cornélie—if I were not past the young years of love, and did not the memory of one that is no more, at least to me, deter each tender thought, he might indeed see a rival in me, or more properly I in him."

"At another moment I could be merry on this score," replied she, "and at another I would hear, if you would deign to tell it, the story of her, who reigns the queen of your thoughts—we shall be the better friends for that confession, for there is a free-masonry of passion, which binds the initiated together—but as to his jealousy, heed it not, 'tis like his love, put on."

"I do think, you wrong his sincerity, Cornélie."

“Do you think so?” and she mused, as if the contradiction pleased her. Perhaps she had been thus severe in her character of Girouette, in order to induce me to become his defender—but I am so dull, that these little tricks of woman never reach my perceptions, till it is too late to play in their favour.

Meantime we had made progress on our mountain road, which, though not the same, lay pretty much in the same direction with that, which I had pursued in company with the brothers. It was much more tedious than that straight foot-path, but in company with Cornélie I noted little its descents and ascents, and interminable windings. Although indeed she was too much absorbed in the anxious causes and object of her journey to continue or renew the conversation.

Breque, I remember, was the name of the unhappy father of Paul and Marie. We espied his habitation, high and far, long ere we approached it, and even the first distant sight of



a place, whither we were bound on such a fearful errand, to face the just fury of an agonized parent, was not marked, even by me, without a nervous sensation. Cornélie, who was not without similar misgivings, but hastened her speed on that account, to shorten the painful prelude of anxiety. And in a little time we found ourselves at the outer gate of M. Breque's dwelling.

No sound came from within; not one of the crowd that loiter round a Swiss farm was to be seen:—herds and shepherds had been dispatched far away, that their bustle might not break in upon the gloom of the house of sorrow. We entered, and tied our horses to the gate, menaced rather than welcomed by the howlings of a pair of hounds.

Their warnings, however, did not seem to arouse any of the inmates, for, as we entered the house, Breque himself sate in his arm chair opposite the rude *poele*, or stove, that formed the fire-place of the apartment. It was a chill

day upon these heights, though autumn drew not yet near to its close: and the old man sate with hands stretched forth, as if to gather heat from the stove, that was yet without fire.

He started from his reverie, as he beheld us, but instead of rising, he merely waved his arm, and put it from him, signifying that we should begone, and not intrude upon his solitude. Cornélie, however, continued to advance. The old man struck his hand upon his head as fretfully, as if he had been disturbed in a dream of pleasure; and then in abstraction, more than in anger, for he scarcely looked to note who we were, he seized the arm of Cornélie, to put her gently forth from the door. His countenance seemed to say, I need no idle visits of consolation.

Cornélie seized the arm that forced her along, and hanging from it, said, "Let me stay, and speak with you, Sir; I am the daughter of La Versière."

As if he had discovered that he held a viper,

the old man loosened his grasp, and recoiled ; “Thou, the daughter of the regicide—have I within my reach one of that deceitful murderous family ?” and after gazing an instant, he clenched his teeth, and pressed his closed hands to his eyes, delighted and yet struggling with the horrid idea of vengeance, that was present to his mind.

“Go away,” cried he, stamping, “quit my house, my mountains, fly, or I cannot resist—if it once more were thy brother,” and he ran forward and seized her, whilst I stood betwixt him and the object of his passion, and compelled him to loose his hold, “I would, I would—” and disengaged from Cornélie, he took from the wall a knife, of that vulgar and horrid kind, which was daily imbrued in the blood of his flock.

“Would you assassinate a woman, and within your own walls ?” cried I to him, at the same time vainly endeavouring to urge Cornélie to retire.

"No, no," roared he; "but it is pleasure to think what I might do, and do in justice—'twould be but blood for blood."

"Think it not,—my brother has not been guilty of blood," said Cornélie.

"Where then is Paul, my son?"

"Has he too perished?" asked I, wishing to draw from the old man how much of his misfortunes he knew, and at the same time inciting him to vent his sorrow and resentment in words.

"Hath he, Sir? Ask at home, or of this girl,—look here"—and he displayed the tattered rags of the unfortunate youth's garment—"look here—my son's body, my own flesh—was"—and the old man sunk faint in his chair.

"Oh Heaven!" cried Cornélie, in agony, "that it were no crime to kill me, and that he would, so blotting out his sorrow, his vengeance, and the crimes of Oscar."

The head and pale countenance of the for-

lorn father, rolled on the high chair's back, and he muttered, "The child of my old age, mine only son, and my Marie too—why did they tear me from him" (rousing up) "why was I not let to wreak my vengeance on him, when he was in my power—they gave me my dead child for comfort, two, three, all dead—murdered, and no vengeance—"

Cornélie again seized his hand. "It was Oscar's misfortune," she said, "more than his crime. Paul sought vengeance, there was a struggle for life, and one succumbed."

"Fiend," said Breque, "fiend, beautiful as thou art, is it for this you have come, to increase my anguish by these mock excuses,—or would you tempt me to crime, to murder—me—"

"Will my tears, will any suffering, wash away those crimes?"

"Why have ye come? what brought you?" roared the frantic old man, as the only answer.

"To beseech you, to win you to forgive Marie—"

"Ha! ha!" Breque gave two sounds of an hideous laugh, "forgive Marie"—and he gazed at her, staring with anger, frenzy, astonishment, and yet with some horrible delight mingled.

"Yes, to forgive her, to forgive us, to know her as one of us, the wife of Oscar, my sister, allied with souls of purity and honour, though the world has blackened our name."

"How fair and soft she speaks, with what a tone and truth, as if—nothing had happened. Gentle as my own child—the regicide's, the atheist's daughter—"

"Do not, Sir, echo back the senseless clamours of the ignorant. My father would not harm a fly."

"No, for a fly's not human—the vulture, that preys on man, disdains to stoop on lesser quarry."

"What shall I say—what plead?" said Cor-

nélie, "he is frantic and inexorable. Will you forgive your daughter?"

"Forgive—the sinless girl—who could have found crime in her—it was her curse, not crime, to listen to that fiend—Heaven knows that I forgive her," exclaimed he, clasping his hands.

"And you will see her?" said Cornélie, forcing herself to smile.

"Have *you* seen her?" asked Breque.

"No, but I fly this instant to bear your promise to her."

"She is here."

"Who? Marie?"

"Would you see her?"

The expression of Breque's countenance was indescribable, 'twas petrifying—there was a horrid something in its calmness that held Cornélie dumb.

He rose, took hold of her, and passing his hand convulsively across his brow, he moved towards an inner apartment. I followed,

spell-bound ; but had not entered, when a shriek from Cornélie precipitated my steps.

The beautiful form of Marie, that I had last seen clinging round the neck of Oscar, here lay extended, pale in death, her little infant, to which she had since given birth, in her arms, slumbering the same last sleep with its mother.

The father, with rigid countenance, pointed to his child and grandchild, holding up at the same time the wretched tatters, all that remained of his beloved son. Cornélie sunk senseless to the earth ; after an instant's stupor, I bore her from the apartment : and it was many minutes, ere the old man broke from his fixed and silent attitude ; and as I beheld La Versière's daughter slowly recover, I was glad to hear the hapless father fling himself down, and vent his sorrow in a flood of tears.



## CHAPTER XI.

I COULD not hope for some time to raise Cornélie upon her steed, and recommence our journey homewards. She lay upon the threshold. Some of the family, the sisters of the unfortunate Marie, had come forth from the hiding and weeping-places, whither the terror of their father, as well as sorrow, had driven them. Monsieur Thouin also soon after made his appearance—to my delight, for I feared some fresh paroxysm or extravagance on the part of the old man.

He was surprised indeed at seeing us. He did all to soothe and restore Cornélie, but she still remained in a state of torpid grief. From

him too I learned all the circumstances, which were yet unknown to me, and which had produced the fatal catastrophe.

Some straggling hunter had lit upon the remains of Paul, and had instantly brought word to the Breques, as it was known that for a day or two the youth had been missing. Breque instantly sallied forth, and was soon too well convinced of his son's fate. His people climbed the rocks; on the snow above, and on the fatal ledge, marks and footsteps were discovered—following the track of these led them to the hidden chalet. Marie was there, the crisis of her dangerous state approaching, which the sudden appearance of her angry father hastened, rendered more dangerous and finally fatal. The wounded Oscar was too weak to defend himself or her: still he rose and made the attempt. It was in vain. He was not killed; though it was with the utmost difficulty, that the followers of Breque, in dread of the consequences to their

master, more than from humanity, restrained him from taking life for life. In the end, he was flung from the chalet, unpierced by weapon, but not without the expectation that he must perish from neglect and cold. Marie was borne home, where she had scarcely arrived, when she gave birth to a child. The rest I knew—more even than Thouin, who in his humanity was anxious that some one should be dispatched to rescue the unfortunate and imprudent Oscar. I told him, that his father and brother must have found him on the preceding evening, not many hours after the discovery and catastrophe had taken place. This satisfied the pastor, who, after a few words of consolation to Cornélie, entered, and hastened to calm the intemperate grief of Breque.

The old man welcomed and humbled himself before his spiritual guide and friend ; and during the remainder of a long interview, the sounds of outrageous grief, of vengeance, or de-

lirium were no longer heard to burst from him. Quiet again reigned in the house of death, and Cornélie at length recovered strength sufficient to express her wish to me that we should depart. With my aid she arose, yet lingered in doubt, wishing to speak a parting word to some of the family. But the daughters shunned her as a spectre, and although one or two had been in the apartment whilst she lay quiescent, she no sooner stirred to arise, than they fled with one accord.

We turned therefore to depart, when Monsieur Thouin and Breque came from the apartment, in which they had been together, and the latter, with a calm in his demeanour, that we had not before observed, approached Cornélie.

“I thank you for your coming,” said he, checking himself as he was about to pronounce the word ‘daughter’; “M. Thouin assures me, it was well meant.—You have suffered too—the shock I gave, I did not intend

—I knew not what I did. Forgive me”—and the old man seized her hand, and shed tears.

“Forgive you,” replied Cornélie, with a piercing voice, “it is not my part to forgive—alas! it is yours, and, I fear, cannot be hoped from you. It were not just.”

“Forgiveness is a Christian virtue,” said the pastor, “we all require it, and must extend it.”

“Justice must take its course,” said Breque.

“We have no cause to fear that.”

The old man smiled, and shook his head. We departed. We rode for some distance slowly. Cornélie at length said,

“What power Monsieur Thouin seemed to have had over the despair and fury of this unfortunate parent. My entreaties were not less urgent, not less eloquent, for I felt. Yet at my voice his fury raged the more—at his ’twas calm.”

“The power of his ministry,” said I, “of the creed he preaches.”

“ I have seen indeed an example of its power in sorrow. But it did not overcome M. Breque’s vengeful thoughts, although it brought him to calmness, and to profess forgiveness.”

“ Even that was much—beyond my expectation.”

“ Poor Marie !”

We exchanged not another word, till we reached home, which was not for some hours after night had fallen. La Versière was in doubt and fear on account of her absence, which the circumstance of Girouette’s presence and surmises increased. He and Ossian had succeeded in bringing home Oscar, who was delirious, but who had nevertheless made known to them the discovery and bearing off of Marie by her parent. Her untimely death was yet to burst on the youth’s ear, to crown his misfortunes and despair. Cornélie related to her father the journey we had taken, what we had heard and seen. And now that the

hazard was past, he was not a little pleased that it had taken place—its boldness would contradict any imputation of that plan of concealment, which he had first recommended and had since repented. And the ire of Breque, softened already, must be still more so, when he came to reflect on the way in which La Versière's daughter had flung herself upon him, and had braved his resentment for the sake, as she hoped, of reconciling him to his lost daughter.

There remained, however, still sufficient to keep his fears alive, for Oscar's health, for the criminal process that might be instituted against him, and his own tranquillity, likely to be disturbed, when this fresh cause of notoriety would cause the ex-conventionalist's residence in their territory to be discussed in the senate of Berne. In addition to these, Colonel Girouette's inopportune arrival had made him acquainted with fresh points of the family history, calculated still more to alienate

him, and to offend the of late scrupulous prejudices of the royalist."

How little such thoughts allowed him to sleep, I could conjecture, from the wakefulness, in which they kept even me, fatigued, and comparatively unimplicated, though not uninterested. The light beamed through my lattice, and the fresh morning breeze shook the vine-shoots against it, ere I sunk into slumber. But even this late rest I was not permitted to enjoy—being startled out of it by—no other than my friend Girouette. The Colonel came, armed and caparisoned, to my chamber, and begged, without phrase or circumlocution, that I would descend with him to the garden, and satisfy him by defending myself against his sabre. I never was in less humour, even for the necessary preliminaries to such a step, viz. getting up in the first instance, and other exertions equally troublesome. The soldier, however, insisted. He was determined to begone, he said, but not without some satisfaction.



To begone, I saw, was his intent, and that also an excuse for going was another requisite for him, which an encounter with me, affording flagrant proof of his jealousy, would give him. The circumstances, he had just heard or witnessed, had evidently made impression upon his fickle mind, and had thrown him back into his previous irresolution—to which, moreover, Cornélie's just severity on the preceding day largely contributed. Not that he was resolved to forsake her:—like all weak characters, not resolution, but irresolution was his repose—and he longed to be at a distance, where he might calmly re-consider the state of the case, taking into account the new events, which threw fresh light on the amiability and respectability of La Versière's family.

With these profound and profoundly selfish motives the Colonel awoke me from my slumber by a challenge to single combat, to which I lent a very slumbrous ear. He insisted, I expostulated, and pleaded the idleness of his

suspensions,—but he was no longer to be convinced : and his obstinacy restored me to the courage or rather alacrity, which drowsiness kept down. I therefore did arise, but objected *in limine* to sword or sabre, as an instrument of decision betwixt us, declaring, and with truth, that I had never wielded a piece of offensive iron, since and save once a poker in the days of my college life. Very valiantly, however, I promised to acquiesce in any species of fire-arms he should select, or in any distance for discharging them not exceeding eight paces, for being no experienced shot, I love that arrangement which sets skill at par with simple straight-forwardness.

I do not wish to impute the least want of courage to the Colonel, but in truth he did not seem to relish the arrangement, nor to admire the purchase of a good excuse at so extravagant a risk. Luckily, however, for both of us, there were no fire-arms of any kind to be procured without rousing Ossian and disturbing

his wounded brother. The Colonel had depended on his sword for defence both to his person and honour during his journey—and my neat English pocket-pistols I had many weeks previous presented to Oscar, who had admired them.

Thus disappointed, Colonel Girouette shook me cordially by the hand, and rode off Strasbourg-ward.

At any other moment his abrupt departure would have affected Cornélie, if not grieved her. At present she learned it from me at the breakfast-table with no emotion, save the smile that evinced she knew him. To old La Versière on the contrary, this appeared the most dreadful blow of all; he ardently wished for Cornélie's union with the officer of rank; and, I believe, such wish of his being thwarted, was the only pang Cornélie felt in what she understood to be Girouette's final *adieu* to her.

But the state and sufferings of Oscar ab-

sorbed the attention of every one, and for the present shut out all other considerations. He was wild and delirious, even believing as he did, that Marie was safe in the hands of her father. What, if he knew the truth? was the ejaculation that we all uttered. I need not say, how affectionately and unremittingly Cornélie tended the bedside of her brother. Yet Ossian's love was, if possible, even more devoted and affectionate. Other considerations than Oscar's actual danger, occurred to the mind of Cornélie, of his possible process, of his probable revenge and intemperate conduct, when he should be recovered, and of the ill-omened future that awaited a youth of such rash and ungoverned passions. But Ossian's interest was for the present altogether absorbed in his brother's health and recovery :—he was not so acquainted with sorrow as his sister, and like her and most persons so sadly experienced, he had not learned to make light of the present misfortune by looking forward to

future ones. For myself I began to feel that I could no longer trespass upon the hospitality of this kind family, or intrude my presence upon their private sorrows, welcome although in truth I believe I was to share both. But other objects called me away, and other purposes, which I had forgotten in my listless wanderings by the Doubs. Even had there not been these reasons for my removal, my restless spirit would not have failed to invent some very cogent ones to effect its everlasting and unwearied whims of locomotion.

I signified my intentions therefore to my sorrowing and anxious friends. They no longer pressed my stay. But the warmth of their farewell, told me that they were weary neither of my company nor friendship. To revisit the family, I promised faithfully both to myself and them: and both Cornélie and Ossian were to correspond with me. I embraced them, as I dare not even a brother in

England. Nor during my leisurely-performed journey to Coire, did one of my old *poco-curante* thoughts occur to profane my fervour and my friendship.

## CHAPTER XII.

'Twas coming winter, and every wanderer, like myself, was scaping, or indeed had scaped, from the snows of Switzerland. I crossed the Splugen, that had the charm to me of being the wildest and most untrodden pass over the higher Alps to Italy. Its greatest charm, however, is the contrast which it affords in its descent—from Mont Cenis, the traveller drops into the plain of Piedmont, as vast and unvaried in its kind as the mountains he has quitted,—from Mont St. Bernard and the Simplon are reached the vallies of Aosta and Domo d'Ossola, lovely and luxuriant, it is true, but still we are introduced by degrees to their peculiar charms, which after all are not unique—from the wild and rugged Splugen,

on the contrary, untamed even by the imperial road-maker and engineer, you may descend, figuratively speaking, *a la ramasse*, and after being launched from its rocks and snows, find your descent terminate in decidedly the loveliest and most unrivalled of earth's scenes—the Lake of Como.

Methought I had left woe and winter both behind, when I embarked upon its limpid wave, fanned by the mild and luckily adverse gale of autumn—for had it been favourable 'twould have blown from the chill Alps, and forced me to exchange my sentiment for a boat-cloak.—Its waters were as clear and sparkling, its palaces as white, its ever-greens as verdant, as if winter, its very next-door neighbour, never deigned to visit it. 'Tis sweet, saith the Italian poet, when at peace and in happiness, to recollect the woe that we have witnessed, and that is past. 'Tis sweeter still in such lovely scenes as these, where nature spreads a contrast to all sense of sadness, and where,



such is the vivifying and inspiriting gaiety that reigns around, the sojourner may give himself to the enjoyment of sensibility and sorrow, without fear of external gloom coming to deepen the shade, and darken pleasure into pain. There did I sit down, and write, fresh from memory, what the reader has perused.

The pens of Ossian and his sister have, for a few pages' further progress in the story, relieved mine. It was from their correspondence, that I myself derived the knowledge of the circumstances that happened during my absence in Italy; and their simple substitution, in lieu of recomposing their contents, may serve to vary the tone of my narrative.

The first letter, from Ossian, I received at Milan, where other, though not more powerful fascinations, than those of the exile's Swiss cottage, detained me some time:

“Oscar is out of danger. Let me mention this first, that I may proceed more at my ease with this letter.

“I am used to have few wishes, but one that I have always entertained, was to light upon a friend of a foreign country—and that not an Italian or Spaniard, or any native of those un-intellectual countries, where friendship or love is mere herding—nor did I fancy a German intimate, being one of such a disjoined and scattered nation, is tantamount to being of none. When I said to myself *foreign*, I meant one of that uncontinental country, whom from rivalry we are prepared to respect; in short, I meant an Englishman, like yourself. And I have been gratified, certainly at the expense of some little vanities, and the paring away of not a few prejudices, the operation of losing which pained me to the quick. How soon a mind with books and solitude arrives at a summit in knowledge?—how high, how perfect, he thinks his self-piled pyramid?—how satisfied he

rests?—how vain and idle he grows in his confidence?—Chance sends another individual to break upon the sameness of this solitude—another mind with a new view of things and another world of ideas. In an instant the charm is broken—the system unhinged—and the fabrics of the solitary’s reason and judgment prove as frail and evanescent before the rude arguments of a brother, as the more proverbially frail castles of the imagination are found before a broad gleam of daylight, or an abrupt intrusion.

“What a revolution such an accident as thy visit has wrought in my mind, for example! Let us pass by matters of taste, though there the change is infinite. But in more serious objects :—even now I look forth from my window on the setting sun, that glorious object which I have so often contemplated with the melancholy but contented thoughts of one, that knows no future beyond the span of his mortal existence, and my reflection is, that

though we must all set in darkness like that luminary, we may promise ourselves a more glorious rising, a morrow, and an imperishable existence. This obvious thought must be common-place to you, but to me how new, how consoling, to me whom fate has marked as an outcast and a predestined sufferer! Mark, I do as yet but contemplate the possibility of such a gigantic truth, but that possibility! that glimpse!—how my imagination rushes through the vista, and revels in the endless future.

“If I ever believe, what I earnestly wish to believe, I shall thank my stars for not having been born a Christian; you may talk of the firmness and sweetness consequent on early thoughts and associations being blended with faith,—but no, nothing of that kind can at all rival or resemble the delight I feel, at what is to me a sublime discovery. Ye cannot compare a state of ignorance with a state of knowledge, a life of blank content or despair with

one of hope, a bestial looking forward to annihilation, like a brute dignified with the prescience of seeing the butcher's knife in the future, and no more—this not having known, you cannot compare with the sublime consciousness of immortality :—But I can. I have experienced both. And the charm, not of mere novelty, but of having so noble and novel a world unexpectedly opened to one, is a higher source of pleasure, even to consider it in no other light, than any I have experienced or could imagine.—But you have already warned me to be sparing of these subjects in a letter, a sort of study which we never betake ourselves to in a reasoning mood ; so I leave much for some future conversation on some solemn calm eve, if not in our Swiss pine-grove, which daily becomes less likely to continue our haunt, in some other solitude at least, for that must be the exile's abode : and of a solitude, be the aspect what it will, the mind can always make a sublime.

“Respecting Oscar, who is fast recovering, there is no likelihood of what you most feared, a trial ; although powerful influence has been exerted against us. Such accidents could not pass, you observed, in your country, whatever be the appearance of innocence, without investigation. Perhaps with you this is necessary. But in this simple land, they have a dread of criminal processes—the magistrates recoil from such tasks, as a coward from an engagement, or a girl from a tale of horror ; and all are glad, that crimes, extreme in event, though not diabolical in purpose, be slurred over and forgotten. This forbearance we find on the present melancholy occasion, though we see at the same time that it is not from tenderness towards us. All the petty means of underhand persecution are beginning to be put in practice ; and we already feel the first arrows directed against us. Most probably we shall be obliged to quit the canton, which indeed becomes otherwise adviseable, as the blind and

causeless enmity borne to us by the vulgar, has swoln greatly since the late circumstances. Bigotry hath in this instance unfortunately got the support of reason, and we must submit. Indeed how can we complain, with Motiers almost in our view—Motiers, whence the mild, philanthropic, almost infantine Rousseau, was stoned forth by a mob, that mistook his innocence for sorcery, the fame of his eloquence and feeling, for impiety.

“The present object of our solicitude is to acquaint Oscar with his loss, with the whole truth respecting Marie. I would inform him of it by degrees, but my father says, no—and adds, that he must reprove Oscar seriously, and conclude his reproof with that fearful moral consequent upon his imprudent and passionate conduct. I argue and protest strongly against this resolution. I know Oscar, and think it far more likely to make him ten times more rash and ungoverned, than he has been. But my poor father dreams that he is,

a parent of antiquity, and Cornélie approves those rigid purposes, for which past parental tenderness hath ill prepared us.

“Cornélie herself droops less than usual :—these late accidents seem to have called forth her energies. Misfortunes, provided they be active and bustling ones, animate her, whilst they oppress me; the silent sorrow, that eats, like a canker, into her health and spirits, would but agree perfectly with my temperament. Strange contrariness of circumstances—she who could live contented with an untouched heart, and think it a source of pride to be exempted from the weak sentiments of love, who could buoy herself with high hopes, and, woman as she is, could embrace in her aspirations and sympathies the whole world, political and moral, she is bowed down and tortured by her affection to an individual—whilst I, who was born for the *spes mutui animi*, a weak creature, full of sensibility and affection, who, as your beautiful poet says,



“ ———like the ivy, was formed to entwine,  
And to lean to the nearest and loveliest thing,”

have never yet been doomed to find the object, in which I wish to pour forth my whole soul. And in the absence of that love, which is a want to a soul like mine, I am driven perforce to speculate, and to exert my imagination and sympathies on objects foreign to my nature—I search the wide regions of philosophy, of politics too, for somewhat to absorb my interest. I find at times some name that, I fancy, does so—liberty perhaps, or Platonic virtue, on the *perfectibility* of some other teacher—but it is all in vain—one short revolution of the sun disgusts me with my fancied idol, and so, half eager, half disgusted, I flit, like a butterfly, in search of another. What idle dreams are mine? what mad projects?—Do you know, I have been meditating seriously for these two days past, setting forth to South America, to combat by the side of the patriots against the despot's slave, Morillo. For Oscar, too, it

would be the fit scene—But our parent, but Cornélie—the project may vanish, like so many of its fellows ; I have at any rate derived much pleasure from the idea, and have, as usual, made it minister materials to the poetic task of the day. I have scribbled many pages of Byronism, for since you introduced me to Childe Harold, I cannot cast my thoughts in any other mould. Let me gratify myself by transcribing some of the stanzas, that you may see I have profited by your lessons, in imbibing the spirit of the modern poets of your country :

Is the ship moving?—yes—all steadily,  
And sporting with the waves, that round her prow  
Leap emulous, and sing their sweet good-by,  
Reluctant wheeling round the churlish bow.—  
I have a love for them, I know not how,  
And with a shade of sadness look behind  
On the calm path of waters, where but now  
We glid in peace along—the lonely mind  
Even in the passing wave companionship will find.

The breeze leans silently upon the sail,  
And wafts us on, like Fate, unheard, unseen,  
To where Cumana's sons uplift their wail,  
And Andes wraps her in her misty screen.—

Unfurl thy pennon wide, thou mountain queen,  
 Let thy volcanoes thunder o'er the wave.  
 And pour their lava-tribute to the main  
 To greet our flag of freedom, and the brave,  
 Who come to plant it firm, albeit on their grave.

Sweep on, ye lazy clouds, and you, my bark,  
 On, swiftly on, that in your fleet career  
 My soul may mingle, and relume its spark,  
 That this still eve has quenched ; for in mine ear  
 These shallow murmurings clamour for a tear.  
 Lift up thy voice, old Ocean, as thou wert  
 Right conscious of the glorious freight you bear,  
 And this sad flow of childish thought divert,  
 That ill befits the bard's, and less the warrior's heart.

\* \* \* \* \*

Hark ! the breeze freshens, and th' awakened surge  
 Grows loud in its acclaim, and lashes strong  
 The stubborn vessel with its foaming scourge,  
 Yet still she sweeps unswervingly along,  
 In giant measure to the wind-harp's song.  
 The sick mast strains, till th' ear expects a crash ;  
 The tight cord whistles with its frittering tongue,  
 And should the prow yield from the ocean's lash,  
 The helmsman windward wheels her with a bounding splash,

O'ersheeting the slant deck with silvery spray,  
 That falls, like snow-flakes, melting to a tide,  
 In gurgling channels fretting its steep way  
 To meet its parent brine. While ocean-plied  
 Bold swings the bark, the cradle of young Pride  
 Rocked by Enthusiasm, as it were,  
 By the all-hushing tempest lullabied,

Darkness fit canopy :—But see, afar,  
How gently comes, unveiling it, the morning star.

Oh! that I were less wise, and born of yore  
Mid that Promethean, spirit-giving race,  
Which erst in Hellas taught, that I might pour  
Mine orisons to thee, and in thy place,  
Bright star, behold Aurora's ruddy face,  
Feel that a zephyr's living pinion fanned  
My fevered cheek, and in the rude gust trace  
The passage of some spirit of command,  
Or that of milder Genius in a breath more bland.

Yet now for us a nobler spirit is  
The monarch of the mind. I may not raise  
To such my thoughts, my hopes, my sympathies,  
For they have grown and grovelled all their days,  
And they have met sweet flowerets in their ways,  
Though they were earthly—there they cling,  
Contented as their freshness decays,  
Content to burst forth with some future spring,  
Content to be no more, if there be no such thing.

“I see you upon reading this, not exactly  
knit your brows, such being never your sig-  
nification of displeasure, but rather assume  
that habitual smile, which all might mistake  
for good nature, if they knew it not to be  
contempt. Be pacified, nevertheless. Fast as  
my old ideas are ebbing, they do roll back at  
times upon me in an overpowering wave—it is

but, however, to hasten and continue their retreat. My muse mopes somewhat after this, but the concluding stanzas bespeak better thoughts.

It shall not be :—the pride of thought forbid,  
That doth uplift its watch-tower to the Heaven,  
From whom the past and future are unhid,  
The caverns of th' abyss asunder riven,  
To whom the keys of fate are darkly given,—  
Whose birthright is to live immortally  
A spirit of unwearied wing,—whose haven  
Lies where the stars are moored in yon blue sea,  
Where ebbless sleeps the tide of deep eternity.

Forbid it, oh ! ye winged messengers,  
Who to mine hours of contemplation stoop,  
Iris-like, from on high, suffused in tears,  
Yet redolent of promise and of hope.  
Here, as through Fancy's idle maze I grope  
In speculation blind, fair form, descend—  
Teach me with Sorrow's suasive power to cope,  
Shake off her cypress bonds, and manly wend  
My liberated steps to some more glorious end.

P. S. "I really know not what to think of Girouette's brief visit and abrupt departure. My father is grieved beyond measure. Cornélie will not speak. I am sorry that I did

not talk more with you on the subject. You were here and observed him, and could tell me at least what you think. His coming would look like sincerity, if his departure did not lead one to construe all as an insult. Cornélie reproached him. Had she not cause? To assume such as a pretext for being offended is meanness. I know not what to make of that man, I never knew:—but villain or honest, he shall not have trifled with us with impunity.”

## CHAPTER XIII.

AFTER a short interval Cornélie wrote to me to Genoa :

*“ Monsieur et ami,*

“ I MUST keep my promise of assisting Ossian to transmit to you an account of Oscar's health. He suffered a dreadful relapse, owing to his being told suddenly and angrily by our father of the fate of Marie, which he had caused. All the strength of the house was scarcely sufficient to confine him to his bed. His frenzy raged beyond all bounds. He vowed a hundred times the death of Breque, upon whom, as we told him, ven-

geance could not heap more punishment, than he had inflicted by anticipation: and had he been but in possession of his habitual strength, another crime might have been added to a catalogue already too weighty. He is calm at present, mute stricken at the blow, but full of suppressed vengeance, if not against Breque, against the whole of human kind. We know not how to resist or overcome this rancorous misanthropy, which in him would not rest passive, or satisfied to vent itself in words. Even my father, whose slightest word Oscar used to reverence, now finds his precepts mocked at, and all the noble stoicism, which he knows so well how to act upon and to teach, bitterly ridiculed and vehemently contemned by his son. This grieves him, and us all, beyond measure.

“As to Ossian, he has turned devotee, and has become of no manner of use, save to utter mad paradoxes, and expound them in still more mad couplets. You have infected him,



Sir; and my father says, that if the Breques have occasioned him the loss of one son, you and M. Thouin, but principally you, have robbed him of another. He has learned to exclaim in your superstitious tongue,

“ Hang up philosophy ;”

and argues that the best and noblest ethics, such as actuated and contented the heroes and statesmen of the ancient world, are wretched nostrums, inefficient as guide or medicine to a passionate mind—nay, he preaches resignation to Oscar on a Jesuit’s terms. Oscar raves at this—my father says, his sons are fit personifications of madness and folly. I could be angry, did I not think both to be paroxysms, that will exhaust themselves and disappear, but for the present they are truly troublesome and degrading.

“There is no longer any doubt that we shall leave this. We have already commenced preparations for removal. The neighbourhood of Basle my father fixes upon for his next

resting-place,—but whether to be his final one or not, remains with fate and his persecutors. To me, all corners of the world are alike welcome and agreeable—the same feeling of unmerited misfortune will hallow the barren scene, that will sadden the smiling one; and fortunately my past life and future hopes offer on either side neither causes of regret or of impatience.

“No tidings since from the strange being whom you met here, who indeed had every cause for his abrupt departure and subsequent silence. My brothers, however, will not believe this. Pray do you bear me out in writing the truth to them. I would not for the world, that such trifling acquaintanceship of mine should prove another cause of strife. But Oscar is in search of objects of anger, and even Ossian joins him in unjust indignation against C. Girouette. They talk of writing, demanding explication, and involving us again in anxiety and despair. Do exert yourself on

this occasion. You have influence over Ossian at least, and he, perhaps, is in this instance the most unreasonable."

Meantime the winter rolled over my head at Chiavari, where I had arranged to spend it with a friend suffering under ill health and dejection, maladies that wore off in that delicious clime. The great and only excitement that we needed there, was afforded us by our weekly receipt of letters from friends o'er the sea. I had few indeed even in my own land. But I enjoyed my friend's solicitude, as he broke the well-known seals; his family became mine for the moment; and although I scarcely would, and scarcely did speak with these on my return, distance made them seem there to me the affectionate relatives, that fate has altogether denied. However, if my friend communicated to me and made me participate in his epistolary pleasures and pains, I in turn repaid him by communicating the correspondence of the La Versières. And well do I

remember how often we have traversed that lovely beach to Sestri along the Mediterranean shores, mingling our delight at the calm sea, and the olive and orange-clothed precipices on either side of us, with converse, wishes, and conjectures respecting the exile's family—how eagerly, in the dwarf, cool porticoes of the town, I perused the long letters of Ossian, verse and prose, and the more brief and capricious ones of his sister. Ossian's moral and religious disquisitions, however, although interspersed with rhyme, and interesting to me, might prove mere prose to the reader; at any rate they would be misplaced in this narrative. Suffice it to extract from them, that he became a Christian—that Cornélie was in astonishment, indignation, and despair on that account—and that his father shook his head, and said nothing, grieved at times when his warm and eloquent son overpowered or rather overtalked him in argument, but otherwise little affected by a conversion, which the old man at length

began to see might tend to improve Ossian's prospects in life.

The last post-marks were those of Basle. I had obeyed the injunctions of Cornélie in writing to Ossian all that I had witnessed and thought respecting Colonel Girouette; and I was sorry to observe, that in reply the youth made no mention of the Colonel, nor of my opinions, an appearance that made me suspect a resolution fixed, and that perhaps neither the most prudent, nor most just. Oscar was reported to me, as recovered, and meditating some such plans of emigration, as Ossian, his poetic brother, had sung in one of his letters, but had since never thought of executing.

Correspondence, however, even between the oldest friends, is of that species of flower called *annual*—meeting, converse, and social enjoyments, must recur at intervals to put the fresh seed of friendship in the ground, else the soil will fail to sprout epistles in due season. This is pedantic—however it conveys my idea to the

reader, who may be, if he be not already, convinced of its truth. Great and unfeigned as was the interest and friendship I bore to the La Versières, latterly, of days when I should pen replies to them, I happened to be weary, drowsy, busy, or relaxed. I was not in the vein. The task was deferred. Then the ideas were flown. I had to re-read their letters—but their freshness, which inspired me with corresponding vigour, was gone. I did not write for a month, and even then there went but a sorry excuse. They thought me worthless, proud, forgetful perhaps, and they were wrong:—or more likely still, they were precisely in my own predicament, and thought nothing about the matter. How often have I cursed my neglect, my ingratitude, my self-ignorance, when wandering dull and solitary to the post, I found not there the wonted excitement and delight of a letter from my friends in Switzerland?

## CHAPTER XIV.

*“Zephire torna, e il bel tempo rimene, &c.”*

WE were able to repeat the beautiful sonnet of Petrarch at Chiavari a long time ere winter had forsaken less favoured regions, even of Italy. And when the spring did really make its advances, I felt, like the swallow, my migratory propensities return. My friend too, in restored health, bent his course eagerly towards old England, his eagerness envied by me, but being without the eagerness I envied not his destination. The valleys of the Rhine were the mines of the picturesque, which I purposed during summer to explore; and parting from my compatriot, I bent my course

once more by Milan, and across the Simplon.

Again did I follow the course of the Doubs, and again demand a night's hospitality from my old friend, the *curé*. He was elated on beholding me,—discarded with delight, which he would not have done for an ordinary visitor, the volume of the *Génie du Christianisme*, that he was perusing, and even carried his attentions so far as to exchange the bottle of light *Coté* wine, which stood already on the oaken table, for one of more generous Burgundy. I asked for Breque. Nothing extraordinary, was the answer. The good man tended his flocks and herds, and lived in usual fashion, praying against the intrusion or vicinity of an atheist and his family, as he did against a blight of his scanty crop, or the more dreaded destruction of his flocks by lightning or *lavange*. A huge cross, he informed me, marked where Paul had fallen; and report had so exaggerated the circumstances of the homicide, that if tradition



at all performs its duty of amplification by the story, it bids fair to rival the most fearful one in romance. And had I learned at second-hand, instead of witnessing the event, it had gained a far greater interest for readers, than I have been able to communicate to it. One interpolation indeed by no means pleased me, which was the part which a certain Englishman, atheist also and Jacobin, was said to have had in the affair. The mention of this caused me instantly to alter the resolution I had formed, of spending the next day with the worthy curate.

He in his turn questioned me respecting the La Versières ; giving me first, however, to understand that he had heard of Ossian's conversion. I was able to afford him little additional information, as a letter had not reached, nor indeed been merited by me for the preceding three months. We talked together, to our mutual delight, on various matters, chiefly serious ; during which the good old man grew so

heated, and I myself so enthusiastic, that he recommended and even prayed me to become a cleric and a missionary, and to sail forth to convert the savage and the heathen of far climes. It was not with the smile of ridicule that I met the old *curé's* proposal, although I did not think proper to follow it up. Good old man! never do I take up a Zimmerman, without my thoughts instantly recurring to thee, and often do I take up the, still to my manhood, delightful work on Solitude, which made me crazy when a boy, that I may revert to thee and Locle.

A few days more brought me to Basle, and to the exile's new retreat. It was pointed out to my inquiries, in a gay, though sequestered spot, commanding a view of the distant Rhine. And delightful were the anticipations, with which I approached it—once more to see the old exile himself, and to converse with him on the revolutionary times, in which he was so personally read,—to renew my friendship, my romance and argument with Ossian—to hear

the sweet tingle of Cornélie's harp, and listen to her mellow voice. As I entered the gate of the little demesne, I bethought me of the reproaches about to be poured forth upon me, and of the necessary excuses with which these were to be met. The silence that prevailed in and around the cottage, joined to the neglect, I knew unusual, in which its parterres and flower-knots lay, caused me to exchange this for another species of anxiety. Cornélie met me in the hall, as she descended the stairs, and a loud exclamation that burst from her, who was wont to be so firm, told that late watching and anxiety had enfeebled her. Her looks bore witness to the same.

"Come," said she, "you have been of the family in trying moments—there is another now for you to witness."

She led the way upstairs, as she spoke; and I found myself immediately with the assembled family in the sick room of the old Conventionalist. The first glance convinced me, that he

was on his death-bed. I could read it in the visages of his children, as well as in his own.

Ossian had been speaking, for his cheek was flushed beneath his tears. But the old man made him no answer, except by requesting the window to be thrown open, that, like Rousseau, he might take a last farewell of the green fields and of the sun. It was done, and the perfume of the spring's fresh verdure gratefully filled the room. La Versière strained his gray, dim eyes, to take the last look, that vanity even in death, rather than sentiment, suggested to him, and then closed them. It was an answer to Ossian, and a melancholy one. The eyes of Cornélie glistened proudly through her tears. La Versière made a sign, that he wished to be left alone. All withdrew, save Cornélie, who concealed herself behind the hangings of his couch. We had not long descended, when the brothers were recalled by her cry of grief. Their parent had ceased to breathe. He died, "and made no sign." Nor was the death of

the unbelieving regicide aught but calm, resigned, fearless, and in all becoming a philosopher.

There are some preachers, who seem to think that the chief excellence of religious belief consists in its being a kind of cordial. This is not my view, seeing pride or stupidity oft as powerful. I, for my part, can compare the very different ends of Hume and Johnson, without drawing from them any conclusion whatsoever, save such as respects the nerves of these illustrious men.

About a month after the death of their parent, I visited the La Versière's at Basle. They were preparing to return to Paris, the connexions of Cornélie being there resident—it was the field too, however hostile were to them all powers that be, for both Ossian and Oscar to pursue some or any possible career. Ossian was eager to enter the lists of fame, as a poet and a man of letters, and no doubt the youth thought himself sufficiently skilled, even

in politics, to become instructor to the nation. I listened to these schemes, and took care not to speak my ideas thereon, which would have only lost me a friend, without going farther to cure his delirium, than a little momentary mortification. When consulted in these points by enthusiastic and sanguine youth, as a pilot taken on board by a ship in full sail, I never presume to call in question the prudence of making for a certain port, I merely confine my influence to rendering the voyage as little hazardous as may be, to pointing out the rocks and currents likely to beset the giddy navigator. To endeavour to turn the ship about in such a case, merely incurs the risk of being sent overboard, and having a more obsequious and interested pilot taken in one's place. So did I listen, so reply to Ossian. He thought me cold, and our friendship in consequence cooled greatly; but it still held on, and I had no doubt that a little time and experience on his part would reknit it.

Colonel Girouette had written, immediately upon the Conventionalist's decease, to his family, offering warmly his services, his interest, his friendship. But with respect to Cornélie, his letter was in the same tone of pique, ambiguity, and irresolution, that his past conduct had evinced. She was at that time still drooping under her recent loss, and Ossian intercepted and concealed the Colonel's letter, mentioning it to Oscar and myself, and charging himself with the task of answering it.

It so happened, that we all set off together from Basle, in our way to Paris. I had given up the Rhine for other considerations. Although more sincere or more affectionate children never mourned parent, than did my companions, yet were we not without cheerful and pleasant hours upon our journey. The young men were both sanguine and full of anticipations: Cornélie, sad as she remained from past and recent misfortunes, as well as from habitual temper, brightened up on being about

to revisit the scenes and friends of her youth ; some changed no doubt, but others, she hoped, unchanged. In Paris too, she knew that bigotry and ultra-royalism did not prevail so fiercely as in provincial towns and villages, where her name had been sufficient to exclude her from respect, as well as from society.

One of the stages where we stopped in our route, was Nogent-sur-Seine. It struck me, as well as Ossian, that in the vicinity of this town stood the Paraclete, famed as the retreat of the celebrated Eloise, and whence those ardent letters, which Pope has paraphrased (on which avowed, but unconsidered plagiarism, by the by, rests all his claims to tenderness and feeling as a poet), were addressed to the more selfish and unhappy Abelard. It was proposed and resolved to delay and visit the ruins, for we conjectured, and with justice, that the convent had not escaped revolutionary destruction.

We thus lingered a day on the banks of the



Seine; and it may be supposed, how much our conversation turned on the ideas associated with such a spot.

"I cannot imagine," said Cornélie, who had rather reluctantly yielded to Ossian's proposal of devoting a day to the Paraclete, "what secret charm lay hid in this intrigue between a monk and nun, to cause it so to command the sympathies not only of their own age, but of succeeding centuries. It must have been man's innate love of scandal, especially when told against the gravest of all hypocrites, the nuns and friars, which secured the tale such universal interest and attention."

"Go, thou doubly profane," said Ossian, "to ask such question or assign such cause, and not to know, that genius recording passion is at once the most powerful and immortal of mental agencies."

"Abelard," said I, "was a man of learning also, the most popular literary character of his century, although his literature did come

forth in the shape of syllogisms—he was the Rousseau of his day. Is not that too a reason?”

“A more sober and comprehensible one than Ossian’s. But I could supply even another?”

“Do, by all means.”

“The satisfaction and delight of common sense to behold nature avenging itself on the absurd prohibitions of priestcraft, passion breaking through the grates, and eluding the inhuman vows of a cloister.”

There is no stop in the zeal of a young proselyte, and Ossian was flying, or rather drawing breath, to defend monks and monastic institutions, on the same principle of conformity that made Gibbon argue in support of the Inquisition, when I stepped in to save him the absurdity.

“If love had not such obstacles, where would be romance? But for the existence of cloisters, we should have been this day tra-

versing the dusty pavé, without giving one hour to sentiment and idleness—Abelard would have been no hero—”

“Nor Melanie no heroine,” said Ossian, alluding to the popular drama of *La Harpe*.

“Man alone,” observed Cornélie, “would prove sooner sufficient for woman’s unhappiness, if there were never such things in the world as grim cloisters, or peremptory parents.”

Oscar looked at his sister, but she was unconscious of the pang she had inflicted.

“Man might tell the same tale of woman,” replied Ossian, “and with as deep a sigh.”

“Have you cause to say so, Ossian?” said Cornélie, “you, who, I believe, never tasted pain or pleasure, that was not the unreal produce of the imagination.”

“For that matter,” exclaimed I, “all our woes shall be unreal. We approach the terrestrial paradise, in the opinion of all true

French-born, Paris—and there shall all suspicion and disappointment be cleared up.”

“We accept your prophecy,” cried Ossian; “shall we not, Cornélie?”

“It shall weigh with me fully as much as any other.”

Thus did we while away the hours amidst the ruins, and in the ancient garden of the Convent of the Paraclete.

We returned to Nogent, in excellent spirits, and with impatient appetites, that ill befitted our late pilgrimage. The repast however was not prepared, and in the mean time I took up the *Journal de Paris* of a recent date, that lay in the apartment. The very first paragraph that struck my eye, was the following :

“Yesterday, Sunday, the king has signed the contract of marriage between Colonel Amédée Girouette and Mademoiselle Josephine Alix, daughter of the late Count Alix, and niece of the General of that name.”

The paper fell from my hands. Ossian

took it from the ground, read the fatal paragraph, and attempted to fold the journal. But Cornélie's prophetic eye had seen both of us peruse.

"Give it to me. It concerns me. Nay, I know it. Let me read."

And she snatched it from her brother's hand. She read the paragraph aloud with a voice that did not even tremble, with a cheek that did not blench. I no longer feared for her, but looked towards Oscar, whose rising fury was to be expected. The assumed impassibility of poor Cornélie was false ; without betraying any external symptoms of grief, the blow had struck within, and her sudden swooning first and alone informed us how much she had been stricken.

## CHAPTER XV.

ON arriving in Paris, I betook myself of course to my wonted *gîte*, far removed from the La Versières, who, from old associations, as well as to avoid being jostled by strangers, settled themselves in the remote quarter called the *Marais*. At first I saw them daily, less often as time advanced: Ossian and I, owing to the reason previously mentioned, were not on such cordial terms of friendship as usual; and Cornélie had not, since her arrival, quitted the walls of her apartment.

I met Colonel Amédée Girouette in the Thuilleries, and endeavoured to the utmost to avoid him. He would, however, and did ac-

cost me. He asked of my health, pleasures, and peregrinations, touched on fifty topics in as many seconds, and ere I could put in one sullen or ill-humoured remark to check his volubility, he was deep in the Befort conspiracy, which had just at that time alarmed the government.

"There will be no quarter shewn for the future to the revolutionists," concluded he, "their own rashness has put the last hand to their ruin. Suspected as I was, from my old connexion, I was obliged to signify my firm adhesion by marrying right royally, and subscribing to the society of *Bonnes Lettres*, in order to save myself from epuration."

"This then was your disinterested motive, Colonel," observed I.

"What other—and yet those boys are dissatisfied—what would they have?" and he shrugged his shoulders with an air of most interesting innocence.

"And this," said I, "was the depth of your

affection for Mademoiselle La Versière, to which you were willing to sacrifice me."

"*Oh! bagatelle,*" exclaimed the Colonel.

I could have insulted the fellow. But his volubility was again alive on some topic of the day; till of a sudden he stopped short with the recollection that he must hasten to the palace.

"But, Colonel," said I, "you spoke of those boys. How have they betrayed their dissatisfaction?"

"How?—oh!—letters, challenges, menaces, discharged from morn till noon like minute-guns. That boy, Ossian, wants me to walk to the Bois de Boulogne for the mere purpose of putting an end to him, which would certainly be the consequence—and not the worst consequence—for the whole affair would be blown by the same morning's wind over the Thuilleries to my disrepute. Besides, I really pity the youth."

"I wish from my soul," said I, "that the



just resentment of the youths against you was appeased by a meeting that would bring no fatal consequences."

"Be assured, that if forced to go out, I shall not act the *debonnaire*. But I had rather hush up the matter, and throw a veil over my past connexion with the name." He here whispered me, that "old La Versière was suspected of having joined in the late plots, and his sons were suspected likewise of having been ready to join the standard. They will be watched here closely, and soon got rid of in some other fashion than by my hand."

I parted from the Colonel; and was surprised the next morning, though not so much as I should have been without Girouette's information, to receive a note from Cornélie, stating, in some alarm, that Ossian was in the prison of La Force. I hurried thither instantly. The wily keepers of the prison made at first semblance of admitting me, till they had learned and noted down my name, abode, &c.

and my knowledge of the prisoner, in which having gratified them, I was conducted outside of the prison, instead of being, as I hoped, permitted to enter and visit Ossian. Proceeding to the Marais, I found Cornélie distracted, and Oscar refusing to her any explanation of what he evidently was acquainted with. When his sister withdrew, however, he was more communicative to me, and he told me, that Girouette, and Girouette alone, must have occasioned Ossian's imprisonment, in order to avoid the meeting that the youth was forcing him to. Oscar attributed this conduct to the Colonel's want of courage, a conclusion in which I did not agree. I mentioned the reasons that Girouette himself pleaded to me. Oscar laughed at them, and asserted that the supposed implication in the Befort conspiracy must have been a ready invention on his part, both to me and perhaps to the government, in order to cloak, and provide a pretext, for Ossian's arrest. Oscar concluded by saying,

that his resolution was taken. I pressed to know what this was, but he would not inform me. He was calm too, and his deportment did not inspire me with fears that his determination was either rash or violent.

It was so, however, as the event awfully proved. On the evening of that day, Oscar La Versière forced himself into the apartments of Colonel Girouette, and demanding peremptorily to speak with him, was shewn into the Colonel's cabinet. It is difficult to say exactly what passed between them. Oscar reproached him with his baseness, both in his conduct towards his sister, and also in the contrived imprisonment of his brother. Girouette denied. Oscar bade him defend himself where he stood, and without clamour, else the fire-arms which he carried should take a speedier vengeance than he meditated with his sword. Young La Versière asserted afterward that Girouette did defend himself, but as no sword of his was discovered drawn, or

weapon near him, the youth in his fury must have been mistaken. Colonel Girouette was found pierced with a sword, and weltering in his blood. Oscar had withdrawn. And the hue and cry of the assassination was rumoured at least around the court, where it gave rise to some panic, doubling of guards, and precautions used upon similar occasions. The next morning's journal first conveyed the staring intelligence to my eyes.

I was now, however, almost too well prepared for any fatal occurrence befalling the family of the unfortunate regicide, to be so much shocked as I ought to have been. Yet how much was I shocked? Blood, thought I, running over the many fearful proverbs, that doom the homicide to the fate which he has inflicted. I issued forth without delay, scarcely knowing whither; the crime of the preceding evening was on every one's tongue. I hastened to Cornélie's abode. But other friends, compatriots, with higher claims than mine to in-

timacy, had flocked around her, to bring consolation, or satisfy curiosity. Great ill fortune, as well as great good fortune, imparts attraction to its victims; and many acquaintances of Cornélie, who had not noticed her or entered her abode since her return, now rushed in haste to shew sympathy and offer aid. It was useless again attempting to see Ossian, and I returned to my solitary chamber.

How full were my thoughts! Such events strike the mind with awe, and incline it to superstition. I could not in my horror, but look upon the fate of Oscar La Versière, twice imbruing his hands in blood, and in all probability to perish by a disgraceful and merited punishment, to be a kind of doom entailed upon the son of the regicide, of him who had joined his brother Conventionalists in decreeing, that there was no God in heaven! He indeed had departed on a tranquil death-bed, but vengeance seemed reserved for his offspring. For the rest of that offspring too,

what calamities might not be in store? Such thoughts will haunt the most rational of us; and though in a cooler and later hour I spurned at the unjust and bigot conclusion, suggested to me no doubt by the law of an obsolete religious code, still it at the moment imposed upon my mind, and to my awe-struck senses wore the mysterious semblance of truth.

Oscar was taken. Indeed he made no endeavour to escape. Girouette's life, though it lingered, was still despaired of; and no doubt seemed to rest on the certainty of Oscar's fate. Ossian was released, and all his energies were exerted to save his brother. I saw little of him during the awful interval of suspense. Other friends, I was about to say self-called friends, but in such a moment they could not be aught but real, surrounded Cornélie and her brother. They were more versed in circumstances, in French life and law, and better calculated to be of service than me. I did not

repine. Nor did my interest and anxiety slacken upon that account. I saw then, for the first time, what I have since proved, that friendships with foreigners are but silken links,—the strength wears out along with the gloss.

I inquired daily after Girouette, and learned at length that hopes were entertained of his recovery. “The worthless are vivacious,” replied to me one of whom I made the inquiry, “if any one could survive, Girouette will.” He did. But this not in the least extenuated the crime of Oscar La Versière, nor seemed likely to have any influence in the judgment that awaited him.

He was brought to trial. It was the affair of the day, and all Paris flocked to it. When the circumstances of the case became fully known, the indignation of the public was awakened against the soldier, and their pity somewhat excited for the culprit. There exists no country in which infidelity to woman is more considered a crime, than in modern

France:—in the last century and the same country it was a title to honour. Giroquette was generally reprobated, and the universal opinion did not fail to have weight upon the judges who presided. Political considerations too mingled with the question, and the acquittal or condemnation of the accused came from a private to be in a great degree a party question.

In conclusion, Oscar La Versière was sentenced to the galleys. The shame of a capital punishment was spared, but that inflicted was scarcely less ignominious and severe.

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Of Oscar I saw no more. Nor was it till long after the unfortunate affair, until it had lost its freshness not only for the world but for them, that I once more intruded myself on Ossian and his sister. The crowd of the curious was no longer around them, the brief sympathy of their compatriots and acquaintances had evaporated. The relatives of the



regicide and the assassin, after the excitement of braving public opinion, which had called friends and adherents around them, had passed, found their name to bring its natural repulsion. And I now rejoined them in that comparative state of abandonment and solitude, which had recently and momentarily ceased, and with which had ceased my intimacy with them.

All this did not fail to strike them on my re-appearance: and the flood of tears, with which Cornélie welcomed me, sprung from, and mingled with, other thoughts than those connected with the unfortunate Oscar. Os-sian's silent grasp of the hand spoke as much. The meeting resembled a reconciliation, though it could not be called such.

"And what consoling thought, Cornélie, supported you through all these trials?"

"None," replied she. "I should have scorned to seek any. I am now hardened against fate."

"The very pride of that thought," said I,

"can have proved no feeble support, though perhaps an impious one."

"What! impious — the stoic hardihood, than can defy alike vice and suffering."

"If not impious, it is at least vain-gloriousness, to flatter ourselves, that we resist or can be independent of the power that rules and influences our destiny."

Cornélie replied by a classic quotation, the pride of heroism kindling in her eye, as she repeated it.

"Such thoughts may allay suffering," said Ossian, "but deep as my poor father instilled them into our minds, they could not keep one of us from crime."

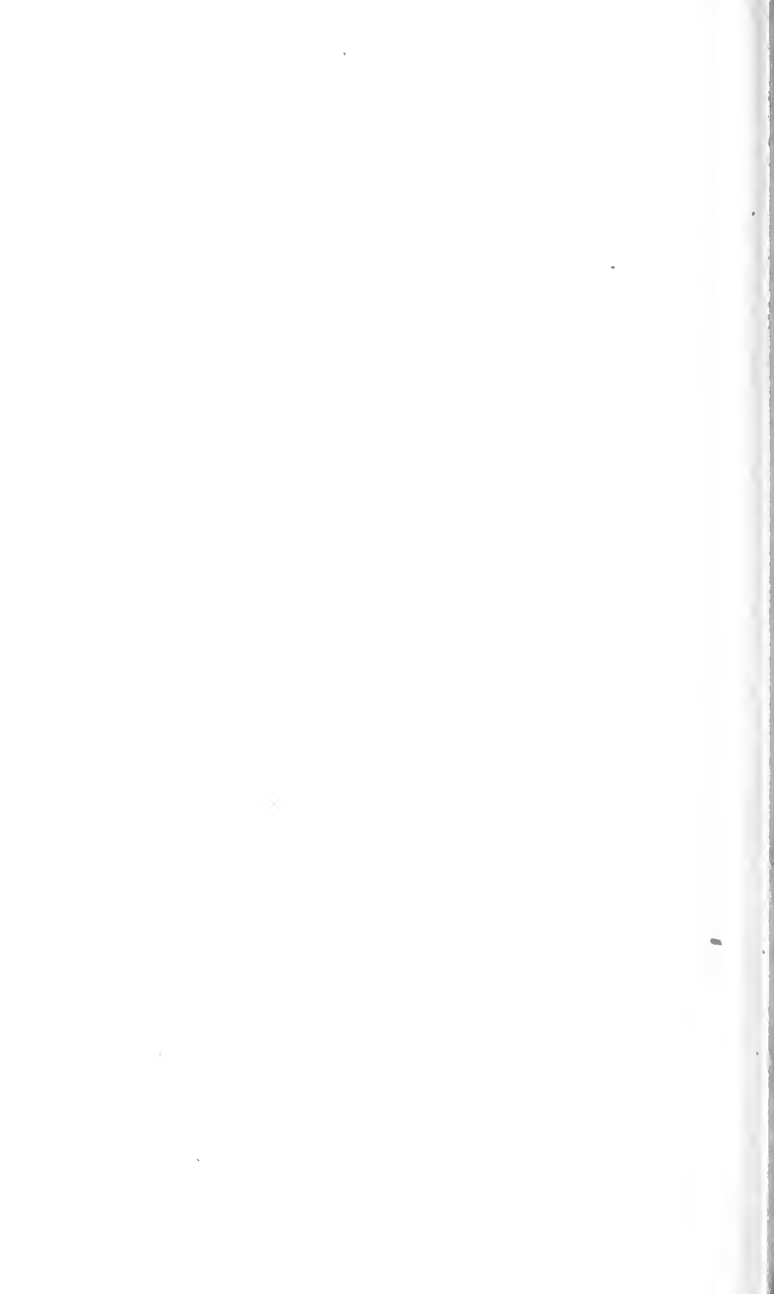
"For me they ever have, they ever will be sufficient."

"So they may seem. Such principles are golden chains, that, whilst they seem to bind, do but adorn the naturally virtuous. The passionate and the rash break at once through their idle links."

“Ossian, let us not awaken griefs, so lately lulled to rest. We have our lives before us to prove, as well as to reason upon these points. Our friend will be the umpire, though, I fear, not an impartial one.”

Thus did sad tranquillity revisit the solitary survivors of the exile's family. Though here for the present I close their story, it is not to bid adieu altogether to characters and friends, such as Ossian and Cornélie La Versière. If they re-appear not for the present, it is that the years which immediately ensued for them, were too unvaried to interest my readers, already perhaps somewhat wearied by the gravity of their discussions, and the too unadorned narrative of their fortunes and sorrows.

END OF THE REGICIDE'S FAMILY.



A

WEEK AT TOURS.



## INTRODUCTION.

It has been seriously objected to me, that in "The English in Italy," I have actually endowed an Italian with courage;—to this I plead guilty:—moreover, that I have made a gallant of the same nation expel an English youth from the heart of an English maiden, and allowed him, in defiance of the rules and creed of patriotism, to overcome one of our own countrymen at once in combat and in love.

In answer to this I can only observe, it is unfortunate that I drew from nature, in that she is sadly capricious, and does certainly represent most unorthodox pictures at times. The said nature, however, like the shield in

the cross-roads, hath two sides and two devices, both true, however contradictory in seeming. Having already exposed one of these to my readers, and they having, I trust, been amused and contented with the same, I cannot now mock at their feelings by recanting, and asserting that it was false. I shall rather beg of them to survey the other side of the shield, and will endeavour to satisfy the patriotism of my readers in a story equally true, and as well witnessed by me as that of the "Amoroso," and in which it shall be shewn that we too may bear away the palm in gallantry.

The reader will remark, and perhaps object to the dramatic and very dialogic form, in which the story opens and is carried on. I may confess, that it had at first struck me as more adapted for the scene than the page, and was consequently turned over and moulded in my mind with a view towards its appearance in that shape. But recollecting subse-



quently my custom of allowing my characters to indulge at times in pshawes and pishes, and other equally profane ejaculations, as also my own habitual freedom of allusion to kings and tetrarchs, their serving-men and women, I abandoned as hopeless all dramatic effort, too well aware that my production could never be sufficiently immaculate to please the rigid and virgin taste of our great dramatic censor, whom —— long preserve.



A  
WEEK AT TOURS.

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CHAPTER I.

“ Ah ! Rutledge !—who the deuce would have thought of seeing you here in Touraine, in the very heart of *la belle France* ? ”

• “ Not I, in truth, a week since.”

“ You, a born, sworn John Bull, whom the sound of aught but old vernacular, you used to declare, made you sick ; and who to my remembrance hast, from a schoolboy up, considered a Frenchman in the same category with a frog.”

“ And still do, by my patriotism. Witness my sore bones and sour stomach—shaken to a mummy by jolting over some three hundred miles of cursed French paving-stones—my

daily food, pullets lean as my tooth-pick, and beef, good lack! the very ghost of viand—vinegar, sour and sad, though honoured with the name of wine, for my daily and nightly beverage—all this, do you think, has reconciled me to the land of frogs?”

“Come, come. I wonder the smiling vineyards, as you passed along, did not put you in a better humour.”

“Vineyards—do you call those dwarf gooseberry-bushes vines? Why, our own hop, or John Barleycorn himself, presents a nobler crop.”

“Nay, you are incorrigible—but will mend. John, when he comes abroad, is like a bottle of his own ale. The moment you broach him, first comes the fizz of his spleen, then bubbles the froth of his prejudice, and anon flows the honest, generous, mellow liquor of his good nature.”

“Out upon your simile. I’ve read in some Frenchman something like it.”

"But come—'tis time you tell at length, what make you from the courts at Westminster, Horatio?"

"No truant disposition, good my Lord. Morn, noon, and night have Coke and Blackstone —"

"Nay, out upon your law, since you have no quarter for my similes. What is the cause?"

"A jade simply, a jade."

"Indeed. Why this is even more astonishing than to see you at Tours. Rutledge turned gallant! the sober, settled Rutledge, who chose a wife ere he was bearded, and resolved prudentially not to marry her, till he had attained the age of reason!"

"The *res angusta domi*,——; my poverty, not my will consented."

"Go to. By George, thou deservest to lose her! But say, thou mongrel lover, half bachelor, half husband, has thy spouse jilted thee? Is it in search of her, or of some other

fair, that you have ventured your legal head and right precious person within the fearful realms of his Majesty of France."

"In search of her and of no other, of Sophia Mordaunt."

"Ah, ah! my lover of the long robe, this comes of putting off trial."

"No mocking, fellow-student. There is more at stake with me, than will bear a jest."

"Nay then."

"I must demand still more than your forbearance. You have a plotting head, and know the world, that is, the world of women and watering places, better than I do. Can you not help me to recover this fickle gipsy?"

"But if she be giddy and fickle, I couldn't advise —"

"Nay, she is honest, warm, good-hearted at core; only these new-fangled notions—"

"Tell it me at length. You must commence by making me your confidant. It is

the rule, you know, in the first act of the comedy."

"This, then, it is. In the good, old times, when we were at war with this confounded country, I wooed and won the fair, and, I may add, not fortuneless Sophia—not that I valued the latter consideration."

"Oh, no one does!"

"Not I, o' my conscience, except that it exposes her to more interested suitors."

"Well."

"Our marriage was a thing settled, as you know, though deferred, until I could get called."

"That I know too."

"Old people satisfied, she no less so. I happy in all the dreams that study left me leisure for. When lo! my evil genius, and hers, and, I believe, that of all Englishmen, whispered to her at a fashionable rout, that she was the only hapless damsel present, who had not visited the continent."

“ Dreadful !”

“ Nay, it came out soon after, that the wife of the grocer of the family had made a trip to Boulogne in the steam-packet.”

“ Degradation and dismay—what followed ?”

“ What you may conceive.—The old folks were soon wheedled, band-boxes packed, a rascally Irish valet metamorphosed into a Swiss one by means of a newly braided jacket; and my betrothed, with her respectable parents, transported up some dozen pair of stairs in the Rue Rivoli, at ten times the rent of what the family mansion would let for at home; escorted in the Thuilleries by hungry *gardes du corps*, ready to leap at her thousands, although they were hundreds, and Miss lost in admiration of blouges, boulevards, and the superior politeness of the Great Nation.”

“ In short she has pitched you and the courts at Westminster to —.”

“ Why, how you swear ?”

“ Pardon—I forgot you had just come from



that moral country, where oaths are once more considered treason against the puritanic majesty of the people, and where an old sinner has been paid to assume the office and dignity of Cato, in order to preserve the stage from the profanation of a *Damme*."

"Set a thief to catch a thief, is the maxim of the police of Montrose, as well as of that of Birnie."

"But this fickle, frenchified fair, where is she?"

"Here."

"What, in Tours?"

"Even in this town."

"Why, that is well. She hath then escaped the hungry *garde du corps* you spoke of."

"Not so fast. Monsieur hath a quicker eye to his interest; and no sooner did Mamma bring off Miss from Paris, than my *garde du corps* has got himself appointed to a regiment on the Loire. And here he is at this moment.

I understand, making his hopeful advances to my betrothed."

"And you have come, I suppose, to make him *shew cause*."

"That is as it may be."

"The name of this blade?"

"Florville."

"Florville! what of the *Garde du Corps de Monsieur*?"

"Don't ask me. I know not one Monsieur from another."

"Green uniform?"

"Ay! that is he, as I have been informed."

"A gay, honest, light-hearted fellow, as ever wielded sabre. I know him well, and know also, what seems to me most strangely to disagree with your account, that he has been long attached to the pretty Julie Le Normand, without disparagement to Sophia, as lovely a creature as trips in France. You must certainly have been misinformed, my dear fellow."

“Not at all, not at all. At least I place more reliance on my informant, than to disbelieve him on your opinion of a Frenchman’s constancy.”

“Go to, thou bigot. I tell thee there is more love in one province of this sunny land, than throughout your whole clime of fogs, and withal as much honour.”

“Well, in this case we shall see.”

“Nay, I will stake no such truth, nor any such great question as that of national character, upon an individual’s conduct. Florville may be worthless; if he be, I merely say, that he belies his seeming.”

“Really that is a very beautiful woman in *yon calèche*,” observed Rutledge abruptly, “she is the very first Frenchwoman—”

“How do’ye do?—I’m quite charmed.”

It was no other than Julie Le Normand and her mother. The reader need not be informed, perhaps, that it is I myself who have been chatting this half hour past with my friend

Rutledge in the market-place at Tours. The apparition of the fair Julie marred our dialogue, and substituted another, to me far more interesting. I introduced Rutledge, who made a passable bow for a cockney, and spoke forth his compliments in astonishingly good French, only that he kept his teeth shut. Being questioned respecting their journey, Madame Le Normand said, "they had come to ruralize and spend the summer months at Tours; Paris had grown so hot in summer of late years."

"And only of late years?"

"I don't think we used to perceive it, indeed, in the Emperor's time."

"What might the natural cause be of such a phenomenon?"

"*Ma foi*, I know not. We had no leisure for *ennui* then. And ye English had not come to infect us, or to tell us that a metropolis was an intolerable residence in August."

“And so you travel southward in search of cooler air. But, by the by, Florville is here.”

Julie blushed.

“We had no idea of it,” said Madame; “Julie told me, he was—where is it, dear, you told me he was?”

“At Bourdeaux, *ma mere*.”

“He is here, I assure you.”

“Drive on,” said she to the coachman; “we are lodged so and so—you know our visiting hours and evenings—your friend will do us the pleasure of accompanying you.” Rutledge bowed; and I allowed them to drive off without any further allusion to the cause of Julie’s confusion.

“It is but too true, Rutledge,” said I, “you have but one revenge.”

“What’s that?”

“Make love to Julie.”

“I shall leave that task to you.”

“Nay, I am *celibataire* sworn, as much as Delavigne’s Bonnard, and could quote some

of his couplets to my purpose, if I remembered them. But you—”

“What if I succeeded?”

“Marry her.”

“Sincerely speaking, I love Sophia.”

“And Julie, poor Julie, has not her thousands, a pity. But to allay your terrible fears of success, which savour somewhat of vanity—I can tell your learned self, that with the lively, lovely Julie, you have not the least chance of it. Your gallantry, however, will be welcome, and will serve the purposes both of Julie and yourself. Try it, my good fellow. It may pique Florville, and draw him from the pursuit of Sophia.”

“I begin to relish your plan. But here comes an old acquaintance of mine too :—this seems a general rendezvous.”

“Ay, there’s the advantage of *places* and *piazze*—they are what I love most in a continental town. A *place* is a public saloon, where not a new face nor a piece of scandal

can escape you—it makes the whole population one family. Here is none of your churlish, bullish, nervous sort of acquaintanceship—none either of the pride that *cuts*, nor the meanness that canvasses a salute.”

“Give me the solitude or the society, either always at command, of a metropolis, where neither scandal nor impertinence intrude, where every man’s habits and whims, as well as his house, are included in the Englishman’s castle,—dear London, where alone, throughout the habitable globe, my uncle Toby himself might ride his hobby-horse, without fear of ridicule or detection, to the end of the chapter.”

The approach of the personage alluded to, stopped the argument between Rutledge and myself. He was a fellow in a terribly o’erbraided jacket, embroidered pantaloons, a hat and solitary long green feather, that might become a marshal himself; and a straight, short sword, that Achilles might have wielded, hung

moreover from his broad belt. This military looking personage was no other than the courier, chasseur, and valet of the Mordaunts—an Irish rascal thus advanced into an ornamented French one; or, as he preferred setting himself forth, a Swiss, by the grace of his own impudence.

“Rutledge,” said I, “this fellow must not know that you are here, ’twill mar a plan of mine outright.”

“The hawk is past hood-winking,” replied my friend; “he is keen as the valet of a Spanish farce.”

“He must be bribed then, to secrecy.”

“That will be incomparably the most feasible, and withal most sure. The fellow is pretty well aware that I know him, and will be glad to purchase my silence by his own.”

Up walked Dennis, or *Monsieur Denis*, at the moment, Irish honesty struggling in his countenance with French grimace.



“Ah ! Monsieur Rootlege, I be very easy to see you.”

“And how do you like France, Dennis?”

“Arrah, how would I like Skibbereen, agra : I mane, how would a Pat like the land of potatoes in which he was born?”

“You do not mean to say, you are a Pat, Dennis?”

“I do and I doesn’t. For thof I was born, bred, and rared in Genevy, I own to a bit of the brogue, and a taste of the Irish blood in my veins. My fadther and my modther, troth and I can’t tell which, was from the little island, sure enough, God bless it.”

“Poor fellow, born in a strange land. But, Dennis, why did not your respectable parent teach you at least your mother tongue?”

“Th’ Irish, you mane.”

“Ay, the Irish, if not the language, at least the accent, which you have none of.”

“And now how could the cratur?” said Dennis, with a smile of pity for our lack of

discernment, and another smile, immediately following, of pity for himself, "Sure they died one day arely, and left me, orphan as I am, at the foot of the could Alps."

This was irresistible :—a big, lubberly, broad-shouldered, black-whiskered orphan, abandoned too at the foot of the could Alps, mountains that the fellow most likely never beheld—we forgot schemes, concealment, Sophia, Julie, all, in a laugh outright, which awakened Monsieur Denis at once to suspicion and *his* French accent. He was somewhat angered too, and prepared to be tart.

"If ye cam after Ma'amselle, Mister Rootlege, I can tell ye, you be *le jour après la foire*."

"Hear to him, translating English proverbs into his Genevese dialect! But why, why, good Dennis?"

"Because ye see, ye are not able for the Frenchmen. They have a gay, oily way with them, just like the Pats, and run away with the women, whilst ye are humming and hawing about it."

“And, my dear Dennis”—here the hand of Rutledge touched that of the courier, and that not emptily nor insignificantly, “can you stand by, and see this—see your old acquaintance outwitted, and allow your young mistress to be carried off by a pennyless, French —— countryman of yours.”

Dennis grinned, “understanding and understood.”

“*Mais que voulez-vous*, what would you have me do?” asked he.

“Nothing for the present, good Dennis; say nought whatever of having seen me in Tours: this first, you mark us.”

“Mum for me,” said Dennis, with an arch Irish smile. “*Messieurs, je vous salue*,” said the same personage, being the French chasseur, touching his hat and feather, and taking his courteous departure.

“What an invaluable rascal—*impayable*, as they say here.”

“I hope I shall not find him so,” said Rutledge. “But this scheme—what is it?”

"Nay, fairly and softly. You are deeply smitten with Julie, and commence by directing your addresses to her. If that fail to draw off Florville, we must prepare a bolder stroke. Leave all to me. But mark, it will be necessary to remain utterly concealed from Sophia?"

"I should like to catch, as well as give, a glimpse, just to waken remorse in the jade."

"Coxcomical and idle; it must not be. Change your name, even at Le Normand's, lest Florville should repeat it. But that perhaps is not necessary. The name Rutledge would perplex his jaws, as much as that of Thistlewood did those of the Parisians, when Cato-street was the topic of the day."

"Well, as you will for the present, I am almost dead with fatigue."

"Take your *siesta*, and then you know, on the Realto I expect you."

## CHAPTER II.

THE Mordaunts made their appearance at the evening promenade; by the side of Sophia was Florville, who endeavoured to entertain her with remarks upon her *robe*, bonnet, shoes, ribands, &c., none of which had the effect of exciting the English girl to converse or reply.

Frenchmen, who are so much at home, at their ease, and so truly delightful with females of their own nation, that understand their light *badinage*, and as light seriousness, are sadly awkward in addressing or entertaining females of another nation, especially the English, whose apathy, whose airs, whose assumed caprices they can never fathom nor understand. If they

captivate some of our fair countrywomen, and that they do, the marriage-registers of the Mairies of the English quarters at Paris and elsewhere can testify, it must be chiefly by the magic of their name, the charm of their *étrangeté*, for nothing certainly can in general be more blank and puerile than their wit, more childish than their discourse, nothing more unimposing than their whole manner and converse, when fascinated by the spell of our blue-eyed *blondes*. Even the mercurial spirits of the French, so proverbially inexhaustible amongst one another, sink and disappear, when they are amongst us. They seem the nightingales in the rook's nest, of Quarle's emblems. They are so *morne*, so *sombre*, so well-behaved, that the general verdict passed seems to be, that the French are a very grave nation.

Another fault, and an impertinent fault, moreover, of the French in conversation, is, that they carry it on by question rather than by remark. They never waste breath in mere un-

addressed observations, and leave their companions to answer or not, according to his or to her depth or humour. Each idea is expressed in the form of a demand, and the silent or the diffident companions are thus infallibly put to the torture of a distressing interrogatory.

When Florville had exhausted all the visible wardrobe of Sophia, and when still the conversation did not flow, he asked, how many brothers and sisters she had? knowing right well already that she had none, Whether she had had ever any? Whether her papa had been a knight, and of what order, and whether he had seen service, or perished in the *champ d'honneur*? Whether English ladies wore dimity in the morning, as asserted by Lord Byron, and whether they made a general practice of infanticide, as declared by General Pillet. The young lady stared, nay blushed at the latter question, but the Frenchman, attributing her crimson check to some other cause, went on with his catechism.

Still was Sophia enchanted, and she declared, that she had never known so entertaining a companion. The only foreigner she had been ever intimate with, could not be otherwise. Florville's ideas, however, were by no means so favourable to her, for the young officer not only set down his bride elect as *bête*, ignorant, and lifeless, but declared to himself, that he must ponder, ere he could resign the lovely Julie for such dull charms, even though garnished with a fortune of some English thousands.

In this seasonable mood the young Frenchman was visited by Monsieur Denis, who, as a friend (foreign servants have such amicable and familiar ways), came to inform him of Madame and Mademoiselle Le Normand's arrival. At the news, Florville threw his military cap in air, crying the die was cast, and hurried forth instantly, his heart overflowing with all the warm and generous thoughts of first love. He sought out the La Normands, and lo! his



ancient place was occupied, for my friend Rutledge was, with some toil, it is true—but that wore lighter for him momentarily, acting the amiable by the side of the fascinating Julie.

“ Ah ! Monsieur Florville,” exclaimed Madame La Normand, welcoming him with well-feigned surprise, a sentiment that appeared less sweetly expressed in his countenance, “ introduce our friend—*notre ami le plus intime*, Monsieur Roote,” and Madame unluckily forgot or could not master the name of her most intimate friend.

“ Monsieur is lately arrived in Tours ?” said Florville.

“ This day, as well as ourselves,” replied Madame.

“ Together no doubt,” thought Florville.

“ *Monsieur voyage*, Monsieur travels ?” continued the interrogating Florville.

“ Fixed for the present at all events,” replied Rutledge, keeping his place adhesively.

“ *Monsieur est militaire?* ” was the next question, and rather fiercely delivered.

“ *Je suis Templier,* ” replied Rutledge, as fiercely, emboldened by elation, success, and the presence of his rival, into absurdity.

“ *Vous devez être un peu passé,* you ought to be somewhat ancient by this time, *Monsieur Le Chevalier,* ” remarked Florville, construing the title, which Rutledge had given himself, literally.

“ I am no woman, Sir, to be ashamed of having seen a quarter of a century.”

“ But you ought to be ashamed of having seen near four full centuries, during which time a Knight Templar has not been created; and at which time most of your compeers, if not yourself, were deservedly hanged. Your monopoly of life, Sir, is a nuisance.”

The rising wrath of Rutledge was extinguished in my laugh, which was echoed by the ladies, though somewhat puzzled and mystified by the blunder, which they could not

altogether read. A little explication, however, vastly improved the serenity of the evening, and at least the apparent amity of the rivals.

Florville contrived soon after to direct his whispered interrogatories to me touching Rutledge, and I informed him fully, that he was *bien riche*, magnificently extravagant, and a *lord Anglais*. As is the case, however, in most schemes of this kind, we found that we had overdone the matter. Florville was too much piqued, and at each blow levelled at his vanity, he recurred to his more certain conquest, and more interested flame, in short, to Sophia. He even took rallying on that score stoutly, and instead of wearing penitence, he became hardened in his fickleness, and spoke vauntingly of being appreciated elsewhere. This had nearly converted our comic into a tragic scene : disguise and dissimulation, whether gay or solemn, wear off in a long parley ; and the pique and passion of both Florville and Julie were

more than once on the point of displaying openly, and marring all our schemes by an angry *denouement*.

Madame Le Normand, however, contrived to turn the conversation adroitly off, upon the scandal of the town of Tours, a fertile and inexhaustible subject, useful in general society, as a bed of mud in unsafe harbours, on which a vessel may run aground, and remain firmly moored, at the expense of being surrounded by filth and turbid waters. The duel of last week and its cause formed an interesting topic of conversation; the last economist and his family arrived, another; and the last milord, that had run from his debts, another—all hebdomadal occurrences, however, that excite little surprise and no extraordinary interest. Madame Le Normand, though she had introduced the subject, was by no means rich in the stores of knowledge and anecdote necessary for discussing it; but visitors had in the mean time joined and swelled the party, who most will-

ingly undertook to discourse gratuitously on so delightful a theme.

Rutledge, like a true cockney, exclaimed against this horrid scandal, making at the same time the vulgar and common-place allusion to the tea-table, which drew down upon him at once the resentment and assent of every dowager present.

“ Really,” observed I, “ the only conversation that appears to me either allowed, possible, or worth listening to in mixed society, is scandal.”

The one score of hands of two score of scandal-mongers were thrown up in horror at the delightful assertion.

“ Come,” said I, “ what else shall ladies speak, or gentlemen either ?”

“ Literature and the *belles lettres*,” firmly cried Miss Pike.

“ Blue, blue,” said several voices, sparing me the trouble of the exclamation, and turning

up what of their noses was not naturally so turned, in contempt.

"Politics and philosophy," said another, whom none had the courage to second.

"The arts."

The quotation of

——"Sciences and arts,  
And knowledge gained in foreign parts,"

was enough to silence the fair sketcher. And all in short agreed that observation of each other's characters and behaviour was the only legitimate source, and topic of conversation.

"And a very interesting and fertile topic it is."

"Nothing but the necessity of exaggeration to the dramatist's trade could have made him, and after him the world, attribute malignity to the very staple material of all discourse."

"Agreed, agreed, nothing else."

"For my part, the best-natured and most

truly generous and sympathetic creatures I ever knew in my life, were kind old ladies, who lived on what moralists would call scandal. The sorrows and sufferings of others were their food, their interest, their occupation, their living novel, of whose pages they were never sated—nay, even when their tongue was cruel, and might seem malignant, their hearts were tender, and commiserated the very wretches whom they lacerated.”

All seemed struck, nay, affected by this appeal in favour of the calumniated class of gossips, those most innocent even of village inhabitants. And I have no doubt, that, had it been decorous, I should have had a vote of thanks decreed to me from the assembled damosels and dowagers of Tours, and other such sweet, picturesque emporiums of small talk and small fortunes.

Meanwhile Florville had made his indignant escape, in doubt whether he should run Rut-

ledge through the body, and fall at the feet of Julie in hopes of forgiveness, or else gratify more his spite and avarice than his affection in carrying to a conclusion his addresses toward Sophia. He left Rutledge and Julie in secret hopes, that pique would prompt him to the more honourable resolve.



### CHAPTER III.

“ WELL, Dennis, *mon brave*, what news ?” demanded Rutledge eagerly of the courier on the following day.

“ *Ah ! pire que jamais*, worse than ever,” replied the dandy serving-man ; “ *c’est une affaire arrangée*, it is all settled, Monsieur Le Capitaine has been with Madame Mordaunt to déjeuner, and with a countenance most matrimonial.”

“ What kind of a countenance is that, Dennis ?”

“ All as one, Sir, as if a body was going to be hanged.”

“ Well said, Monsieur Pat : But have you no other grounds ?”

“Mademoiselle has shut herself up. Mr. Florville and Madame talk earnestly in the cabinet—the house is silent, an ear at each key-hole. And the general *presentiment* is, that the *crise* you so much dread is approaching.”

“What an invaluable diplomatist, Rutledge, we have hit upon.”

“Shall we believe him?”

“*Parole d'honneur*, upon my word of honour,” exclaimed seriously the valet, laying his open hand upon his embroidered breast, “you may depend upon my veracity.”

“Oh,” said we, with my Lord Duke, in the farce, “there is no room for farther doubt.”—“Seriously not,” added I, “we must have recourse, if time is yet left, to the rest of our stratagem.”

“I dread the attempt,” said Rutledge, “it is really too much for me. I shall never be able to go through with it. With my slight knowledge of French, Sophia’s thorough

knowledge of me, it will be impossible to escape detection in this disguise."

"Nay, you know far more of French than she does; the concealment may be complete, your visit short and to the purpose, and I will always be at hand to aid and bear you out. Sophia, in short, is, as you say, taken not with Florville, but with the Frenchman, and as rank and title in such light chimeras as these must have considerable weight in the balance, you shall be French, and not a mere lieutenant, but a Colonel, and a Count to boot. She must be right well and suddenly cured of her foreign mania, if she can resist all that. It will at any rate make her waver, and allow time for these absurd whims to evaporate. At all events, you have but to choose between this and shooting Florville. Even if discovered, what can ensue, beyond a laugh?"

"—, but I should look so ridiculous."

"As many a wiser man did before you.

Consent, or I give you up, as you do Sophía, from pusillanimity."

"Well, be it so. But if Florville should come upon us?"

"That is the only danger. But betwixt me and Dennis, it is strange, if his motions are not better observed."

"*Moi seul*," said Dennis, "I will alone answer for directing him as far out of the way as you can wish, at certain hours. For I am his very index, his confidant."

"What! and ours too?"

"*Mais oui*—his at *vingt sous*, yours at *vingt livres*—those great inequalities are so reconcilable to the conscience."

"And you have a conscience, Dennis?"

"*Ma foi, si je n'en avois pas*—if I had none, you would feel it, *mais essayer*, try me." And as Rutledge again touched the courier's hand, the latter, like a generous physician, returned, as "stuff o' the conscience," half his fee.

He had scarcely departed when Florville came up, and greeted us amicably, asking Rutledge, "how was the pretty Julie?"

"*Triste* enough, when we last saw her," was my volunteered reply, as evidently my friend's rivalry on the preceding evening had been pushed too far.

"*Triste*," repeated the young Frenchman, demolishing betwixt his teeth the nail of his forefinger, "how is that?"

A shrug was the best reply of both of us.

"I thought she seemed the gayest of the gay in your company, Monsieur. Did you not think her so?"

A shrug again came to Rutledge's relief.

"What Jesuits you other English are in affairs of gallantry—*bouche fermée*, *bourse pleine*, closed mouth, full purse, is your device. But why should I press you—it is now too late."

"I hope not, Sir," said Rutledge, imitating his rival in the demolition of a nail.

" *Et pourquoi*, why ?" said, and stared Florville.

" I don't know," replied the confused Rutledge.

" What a droll gallant to have captivated Julie," muttered Florville, who attributed my friend's perplexity to *bêtise*.

" Well, Florville, I wish you joy," said I.

" Wish me confusion rather."

" Nay, that you seem to have. But why, have you failed?"

" You know the matter then. No, not failed, rather the contrary. But still, I cannot resolve—at once—*sacrebleu*, if you knew how I am tortured. I'll excuse myself, and join my regiment at Blois for a day, and see what cool reflection shall decide."

" All this is an enigma to us, my good fellow."

" So let it rest, *bon jour*." And away walked poor Florville, embarrassed by the success of his amiability.

“ Now if he hold to this resolution it is most seasonable.”

“ *Exprès pour nous*, the very thing for us.”  
And so we parted.

Florville, as he had threatened, turned his horse's head to Blois, to seek advice, as he promised himself openly, from his own thoughts, as he promised himself less openly from time, and, as he did not at all promise himself, from his comrades, whose raillery was most likely to have influence upon him. I know not, from my soul, how the officers of a French regiment contrive to kill time. They are no martinets, and discipline hangs as loose on them as do their uniforms. Drink they do not, and few of them know half so well as our subalterns the difference between plain Medoc and first rate Lefitte. They have neither race-horses, game-cocks, nor bull-dogs, on which to stake a month's pay; and save dominos, or in superlative good quarters, billiards, they have games neither of skill nor

chance. They are either such *canaille*, or else taken for granted to be so, that chateaus and society around, empty as are the first, and scant as is the latter, are quite *preserved* against their admittance. And how, in short, they do contrive to live, would be quite beyond the conception of any of our military dandies.

They are, however, a grown and good-natured race of schoolboys, brethren and comrades in every sense of the word, without any of the cat-o'-nine tails' austerity of our field-officers when addressing an inferior in rank. Then have they no vying in coxcombry or expense, in nought, in fact, save address at their weapon, and forwardness in the field.

Florville's regiment was composed chiefly of boys at and under his own age, save one or two gray-haired veterans, who in despite of their laurels, crosses, and having seen Austerlitz and Eylau, still held their commissions by a discreet zeal for the restored dynasty, and by carefully attaching the order of the *lis* to their breast by



the side of that of the legion of honour. But those seniors mingled little with their juvenile comrades, who thronged around Florville, and by a mixture of raillery and perseverance, soon made common property of the weighty secrets, that pressed upon his mind. But what resolution or step they urged him to, lies farther on in our narration.

Whilst he is bent upon his journey, the reader's humble servant assumed the liberty of dropping in upon the Mordaunts in the evening, accompanied by no less a personage than the General Count St. Aubin. That both I and my friend were welcome to ladies, one of whom at least had no two desires on earth greater than to know a French Count, and to speak with a French General, need not be told. Nay, the civilities paid to me on the score of gratitude were even greater than those with which the Count was honoured. He moreover was a reserved and silent personage, not very entertaining, I whispered, unless it was his

humour; but then he had seen service, had been of the Imperial guard, was at the Pyramids, at Moscow, Waterloo, and all the world over. Yet was he young, and the glossy blackness of his mustachio unsilvered. That part of his visage spoke for itself, and indeed for other features which it concealed, and it was certainly formidable.

Sophia's cheek was flushed with pleasure, her good mother's with scarcely less; and while they feasted their eyes with furtive glances at the hero, they prepared their ears for marvel and tales of bloodshed. Desdemona never did her ear incline more seriously, than did Sophia. But sometime in vain, for the General, with all the perils he had encountered, seemed as modest and diffident as one on whose lip no mustachio could flourish.

At length the young lady, like most young ladies, resolved to come to the point of interest at once, and boldly asked the distinguished visiter, "if he had known Bonaparte?"

“Oui,” responded the general, with an infirm intonation that made me tremble.

“And spoken with him?”

The second “*Oui*,” in reply to this, was firmer and promised better. And at length it came out boldly that he was aid-de-camp, &c. But still it would not do. The General would not launch forth, would not narrate, began to gaze upon the young lady most fixedly and dully, and his tongue seemed at each reply to acquire fresh reluctance to exercise.

This excessive ill behaviour on the part of my lion nettled me sorely; and I was resolved to have my revenge, abandon my scheme, and at the same time afford us both a pretext for immediate escape, as I saw no chance of any good coming of the General’s longer stay. In one of the lapses of my companion’s stupidity and silence, I therefore took the opportunity of observing to Miss Mordaunt, that my friend was ill at ease, thereby offering an implied excuse for his dullness; that being an old cam-

paigner, he was nightly accustomed to his pipe, the want of which afflicted him with a headache, vertigo, and a variety of complaints, and which therefore we were under the immediate necessity of retiring to seek at some *estaminet* less elegant than ladies' apartments.

The looks of the General during this speech of mine did not refrain from denouncing much both of surprise and displeasure. But there was no gainsaying so plausible, and indeed so necessary a tale. We therefore rose simultaneously to depart. But here we were unexpectedly discomfited. The ladies would not permit of our departure, nor admit the excuse—a Count and a General leave their house, forsooth, for want of the soldierlike and not ungentlemanly solace of a pipe!—They did not smoke—so they thought fit to assert. But to the odour of tobacco they had no objection, not in the least,—on the contrary, rather a predilection—they would procure the weed and the pipe—we must sit still—it could be

got in an instant—it was not the least inconvenience—Mr. Mordaunt smoked. In short stay we must, and smoke we must.

I shall never forget the piteous look which my companion cast on me. My friend Rutledge, for he was no other, had, I knew, an absolute horror of tobacco in any shape, and three whiffs would most probably put the old campaigner, as I had announced him, sick, and most unamiably under the table. However, though not without participating in his perplexity, I was somewhat amused by the merited vengeance which I had inflicted without meditating.

After some time Dennis walked in with the pipes and their provender, placing one, with the most knavish expression of countenance, apt to the visitor's hand. That personage preferred a segar, which, upon trial, he found he could not light, whether it was from will, or unskilfulness, or both, I leave the reader to determine. The ladies were in pain, lest their

segarmight not please the renowned personage; the said personage in agony upon a thousand accounts, not the least of which was the simple horror of committing such a nuisance in the presence of the fair; then his dreaded sickness, the character of gallant which he came to assume, so ill assorting with the habits of the old campaigner, all put Rutledge into such perplexity, that the only approach he could make towards enjoyment of the luxurious weed, was the circumstance of burning his fingers.

A thought, however, that I wonder did not before occur to us, here came to our relief. The General, I bethought me, had been for some time prisoner in England, and spoke our language, though with difficulty and a foreign accent, a circumstance that would no doubt render him more intelligible and agreeable to the ladies. I mentioned forthwith the discovery, which appeared so happy to the General, that he flung down his pipe, and poured forth at once a variety of hitherto suppressed com-

pliments in English exaggeratedly broken. Mrs. Mordaunt protested she understood French perfectly, and that there was no occasion for putting the General to such trouble. But the trouble was decidedly a pleasure. So the pipes passed to their deserved oblivion, and the conversation revived, or rather, indeed, commenced.

We had at last touched upon the right vein, and nought could be more fluent or fascinating than the flow of the General's talk ; somewhat flighty in its excursions from Moscow to Madrid, and flighty perhaps in the other and Munchausen signification of the word, but still all was in due keeping, gravity, and disguise, so that the credulity of the fair listeners was not once over-charged nor their suspicions once alarmed. They were delighted in the extreme, and Sophia Mordaunt forgot all her English reserve in her eagerness to satisfy her curiosity by questioning so interesting and so valiant a personage. Success could not smile

more fully on our scheme. Sophia's fancy was taken by a coup-de-main. And we saw at once that Florville was utterly and irrevocably forgotten. After having audaciously sung a Spanish song, and given a Russian hurraw, General Count St. Aubin took his leave of the ladies, not without vowing to bestow on them the frequent honour of his company and assiduities.



## CHAPTER IV.

DURING Florville's opportune absence, which by the by was ill construed by the English object of his vows, however he had pleaded necessity for it, the General Count St. Aubin did not fail a single evening in his visits ; nor did the Mordaunts fail to be at home. It was unlucky that he was so averse to promenade and *soirée* ; but this, though churlish, suited well with his heroic character. The evening was his only time of going forth, as for particular reasons he avoided scrutiny by day ; but then the twilight hour was most favourable to the impression that he sought to make. Of his

identity no doubt was entertained. Dennis had even the boldness and kindness to assert, that he had served under him, and gladly would take up a musquet again under so distinguished a commander. Latterly too, in despite of his moustaches, he was not wanting in the pathetic, nor defective in sensibility, as he took opportunities of evincing. He was soon struck with the *naïveté*, the beauty, and the amiability of Miss Mordaunt; and it became manifest to both Sophia and her mamma, that the former had made a conquest of the General Count St. Aubin.

Meantime the pretty Julie was in despair at the abandonment both of her real and her pretended lover. Pride or just resentment could not come to her relief; for she had justly merited the conduct of Florville by all the coquetry and caprice, with which the air of a metropolis inspires young ladies. Nor had the young *garde-du-corps* attached himself to the rich and handsome Englishwoman, until the

whims of Julie, the alternate hot and cold fits of that tertian, a woman's humour, had really driven him for consolation, amusement, and even self-respect, elsewhere. Having come, however, to the comparative solitude of the country and to her senses at the same time, she was anxious to make every reparation to her injured admirer, and to herself internal promises of the most reserved conduct. In despite of this resolve, it is true, she could not refrain from some flirtation, as we have seen, with Rutledge; but still, it was with the best and most innocent intention, vain and unlucky as it had proved.

Affairs being in this state, Florville returned from Blois, his ideas ten times more worldly than when he had set forth. The company of one's own sex, whatever that may be, is sure to increase our selfishness hourly, whilst converse with a different sex, is sure to have the opposite effect. There is always a mean rivalry, an affectation of cunning, and conse-

quently an emulation towards it, betwixt males, or betwixt females who herd exclusively together, and which alway forms the *esprit de corps* of such societies. Look at schoolboys, soldiers, old maids, &c. for example, and you will find the maxim true.

Be it so or not, Florville returned from his comrades, fraught certainly with a higher comparative idea of money over love, than the sort of balance which both contesting principles held in his mind ere his departure. The advice in consequence, which he professed to have gone to seek from reflection, proved to be that he should marry Sophia Mordaunt and possess himself of her fortune without loss of time, or without bestowing a thought on Julie, who had the impertinence to be at once poor and a coquette. Such was the resolution with which the young officer re-entered Tours.

Florville was a confident youth, like many youths and most Frenchmen, and accordingly stepped up the Mordaunts' stair without any

misgivings as to the probability of success, or the least suspicion of the revolution which had taken place during his absence. The first salute, which he received from the fair Sophia, was a cry of surprise, which indicated, that, whether welcome or not, his coming was not expected, not looked for, and therefore might whisper jealousy, not very ardently hoped for. But Florville, not being in love, was not so readily jealous. Miss Mordaunt's first coldness and carelessness of manner also, he attributed to *bêtise*, the stupidity before observed; but before he took his leave he began to perceive somewhat more than usual, something that required another cause. He departed somewhat abruptly, scarcely venturing as yet to shew resentment. It might be a momentary whim, a woman's humour. It was sufficient, however, to make him feel awkward and uneasy respecting the promised thousands.

It was evening, Dennis watched the young French spark to his home, and reporting him

safely lodged, gave word thereof to Rutledge, who, in the person of the General, accordingly hastened in his turn to pay his evening respects to his mistress. His reception was even more cordial, than ever it had been previously. The moustache-less lieutenant had sunk in the scale, and the Count and the General kicked the beam. There wanted but a declaration; all appearances, facilities, smiles, and tenderness drew thitherwards: and how it could have been escaped, for that was the General's perplexity, seemed beyond his skill—when once again Florville entered.

Unable to support the fresh suspense into which he had been thrown, he hurried back to make himself more sure, and found in the shape of the General Count St. Aubin a more substantial proof of his disgrace, than he could have expected. Luckily for Rutledge the young Frenchman lost at once his temper, and with his temper his discernment. He eyed his rival however with a glance, which the General,

most unhero-like, shrank from. The twilight, like a seven-fold shield, warded off all danger of detection. The impatient Florville in a little time began to wield his interrogatory, and soon extracted the name, rank, and title of the strange visitor from Miss Mordaunt. He knew no such General, and no such Count, a remark to which Sophia's smile replied, that it was very probable. He then attacked the General's self, who, for the benefit of the ladies, replied the little that he did reply, in the same broken English, that he had hitherto found so convenient.

There was a skirmish of some ten minutes, very nervous to me, who was a looker on, not unimplicated. The General was sadly deficient in the military knowledge, that of corps, acquaintance with garrisons and officers, &c. all of which was familiar to Florville. But then the veteran pleaded being of the old, not of the new army, and covered well his ignorance with contempt of all that savoured of the new re-

gime. This was a new cause of quarrel, for Florville as garde-du-corps, was *ultra* to the point of his sword. He accused the General at length boldly, though politely, of not being a Frenchman, either in sentiment or tongue. Rutledge, who was not aware what a terrible insult the assertion of "*Tu n'es pas Français,*" is in France, replied calmly, as had been preconcerted, that he was Alsacien, and that his tongue might therefore somewhat smack of provincialism. But that, *en revanche*, the beauty of his estates on the Rhine so far excelled those of the flatter and purer tongued provinces of France, that their romance at least recompensed their *patois*. If this excuse did not satisfy Florville, it certainly did Sophia, whose imagination immediately took its flight between the lovely banks of the Rhine, and revelled amongst its scenery and castles.

"Monsieur Le Comte, then, speaks German, without doubt?"

"Every dialect of it," replied I boldly for



my quaking friend; "have you ever read Faustus, Miss Mordaunt?"

"No; but I should like to read it of all things. It was my intention, my serious intention, to have a German master, and—"

Here Florville spoke some Deutsch gibberish at the Rhenish Count, who was too much occupied with Miss Mordaunt's announced intentions to have any attention for the impertinent Lieutenant.

"And learn it of course," said I; "though that does not always follow."

Florville reiterated his gibberish, to which the Count offering no intelligence, I was obliged to say, that "the only German dialect my friend did not understand was the Parisian."

This turned the spark's resentment upon me. He assured me, he had himself taken lessons from a noble, a Count of the Holy Roman empire, and more certainly one than many who falsely pretended to the title.

At this insult all eyes were turned towards the Count, who sate as phlegmatic as could have become his adopted country, not deigning to notice the insinuation of the pert subaltern. The ladies were not so forbearant; the elder expressed her hopes that such a breach of good breeding would not be repeated, and the younger looked a reproof ten times more cutting. Nought was left to Florville, save retreat; which at length he made, casting indignant glances, and muttering indignant expressions against the General Count St. Aubin, and me, his ally.

No sooner had he departed once more, than Monsieur Denis was summoned, and the impertinent Dennis entered exclaiming in a familiar tone,

“*Je sais bien, Mesdames, ce que vous voulez avec moi—I know very well, ladies, what you want with me.*”

“*Eh bien, Denise, ce que c'est que we want with ye,*” asked Mrs. Mordaunt,

putting to the proof the courier's ingenuity.

"'Tis that ye are not at home for Lieutenant, now that the General's come to quarters."

"Fie, fie, go about your business."

"Je n'ai pas d'affaire—I have no business."

"Allez vous ong, Denise."

"Nor Madame, nor Mademoiselle are at home then to Monsieur Florville."

"No, Denise, that is it exactly."

"Then, fy could you not tell at vonce?" cried Dennis, closing the door in a most *un-domestic* manner.

"Really, French servants are so rude," observed Mrs. Mordaunt.

And at the moment I perceived that all the smothered Englishman in Rutledge had risen to crimson his face, and to trouble him with an almost irresistible desire to kick Mister Dennis down stairs; but prudence, patience, and German phlegm prevailed. Having seen my friend so far and fairly out of the danger

which threatened, and so fully in favour with the dames upon whose will his happiness depended, I resolved to leave him to make the best of the advantages in his power. I therefore also took my departure.

I was in a right good humour, and wended my way homeward, laughing, internally at least, if not aloud, at the success of our adventure, and by the light of as lovely a moon as ever silvered the Loire. I certainly thought little upon stilets, ambushes, and such Italian adventures, when the shadow of a figure, that was evidently lurking in expectation of my coming, behind the corner of a street in shade, advanced, and recalled me at once to suspicion and defence. It was no other than my friend the garde-du-corps, and he seemed considerably disappointed at my not being accompanied by my noble and military acquaintance.

“What! Florville, you turned bravo?”

“Ay, any thing for vengeance. Where is this pseudo Count of your creation?”

“With the ladies, I suppose. But why, my creation? I am neither count, nor king maker, neither Napoleon, nor an Austrian Cæsar. But come, Florville, be romantic, if you will, but cool, and let us take a moonlight stroll by the Loire.”

“This Count must fight me to-morrow.”

“Unless the inequality of his rank and yours, which weighs you know with those Holy Roman nobles, should stand in the way, I am sure, he will have no objection.”

“Rank!” and the impatience of Florville denied him the utterance of aught save oaths—“rank! I will unmask the impostor; I will expose him in the public place.”

“All I hope is, that he may prove an amenable monster.”

“I see how it is. Ye are jealous that I captivate one of your countrywomen.”

“Me! I care not, Florville, if all womankind were dying for love of thee. Nay, I would

wish the rest of mankind joy, and bless thee for thy benevolence."

"You are angry, that I should carry off the fortune of Miss Mordaunt."

"A little or so, supposing at the same time that you cared not for her."

"Why, what is that to the purpose?"

"The happiness of a countrywoman."

"And so from this disinterested patriotism you have dressed up a Count to rival me."

"And if he rival thee by the mere name of Count, of what depth are the affections of thy fair one?"

"Deep enough for me, *sacre*, I will teach those who have meddled."

"Nothing, my good fellow, remains to teach, on your part at least; and as little now, I believe, to learn. I thought, in Paris, that you were attached to Julie Le Normand."

"There again, *ventrebleu*, I find another friend of yours installed. Do you keep friends, Sir, for folk's annoyance?"

“ I’ faith, Florville, a great deal oftener for my own. But you say true. There is Rutledge, rivalling you with Julie—why not challenge him ?”

“ Why not, indeed,—as if it were not my intention. I will have wide revenge. Vengeance on all sides of me, I will run both through, Count and gentleman——.”

“ And marry, I hope, both the charmers, by way of compensation.”

“ I should like it of all things—the person of one, and the fortune of the other—but that would never do.”

“ Would it not? Nay then, you must choose, Florville. Look, how beautifully the moon sleeps upon that water, its waving line of light, and those old trees, like dozing sentinels, around that fine old chateau, yet stirring themselves lightly betimes, as if to intimate their watch. This tattling town is quiet, and all eyes, save those which love keeps waking, are closed. What an hour——&c.” The reader may con-

ceive another page full of this nonsense, which nevertheless sounded very well, I assure him, by moonlight, on the Loire.

In continuance I grew far more sentimental, than I dare do upon paper. Florville was touched. I told him the story of my first love, and a most baseless story it was, from beginning to end—sheer invention, without truth, but with pathos, which is ever more to the purpose. Poor Florville, he ejaculated the name of Julie. I begged his confidence; and he told me, warm and generous youth, all that I knew before; which I, equally warm and sympathetic friend, heard without a murmur.

“And can you sacrifice love to gold?” asked I, in the moon-light.

“No, no,” exclaimed Florville, striking his clenched hand against his forehead. “No, Julie, another’s will I never be.”

“And the Count?”

“Peste, let him take her—and her guineas.”



The latter declaration and disinterested resolution came the tardiest. But it was final and sincere.

“And Rutledge?”

“I’ll tear the buttons from my foils this night for him.”

“Nay, but this is the effervescence of the moment. Self will return with the morrow.”

“If it doth—may this hilt,” and Florville grasped his sword, “fall from the dishonoured hand that holds it.”

“Bravely said, Florville. But I must home to bed.”

“Stay but an hour longer, my dear fellow.”

“Not an instant. I am neither ghost nor lover, to live on the midnight air. Good night.”

“Good night,” and his parting grasp was worthy of the most sworn brothers in the days of chivalry.

## CHAPTER V.

MEANTIME the conversation of the pseudo-Count with Sophia took as interesting a turn, as the ingenuity of the former could bring about. But its success was not so full as his expectations; the admiration of the English damsel for her foreign admirers whether *garde-du-corps* or General, seemed not to go farther than vanity and a love of flirtation. Serious hints she seemed either to avoid or play with, and the General found, to his internal delight, that if either he himself or the young *garde-du-corps* had succeeded in gaining the hand of the lady, it should be by that system of persever-

ance, which can always force a weak girl to espouse whomsoever she has once tolerated.

With joy Rutledge communicated this discovery to me on the following morning; and I, for my part, did not want news equally agreeable to him. I told him of Florville's ambuscade, and the sentimental scene on the banks of the Loire in which it had ended. My friend was as grateful as he was amused. But still how to bring about an advantageous *denouement* remained a difficulty. Florville's determination to quarrel with Rutledge seemed to offer means of proving openly where his attachment was fixed, and this might be turned to advantage. The General Count St. Aubin too still remained in reserve to punish Sophia, if nought remained but to punish her. But notwithstanding Rutledge's confidence, I still dreaded that the predilections of the capricious maiden had been more firmly turned towards the gay young *garde-du-corps* than he imagined.

While thus communing, the arrival of a de-

fiant epistle from Florville, written evidently, from the high and heated tone of it, on the preceding night immediately after the determination taken, was delivered to Rutledge, and fulfilled for us the chief point of what we were supposing. It commanded the immediate cession of all pretensions, else vengeance the most speedy and hyperbolical was denounced, and a meeting for that purpose instantly requested. This was addressed to Monsieur Root, who laid up the document with care, and in answer referred Florville of course to me, his friend, for all arrangements or explanations. His next step was to call on the Le Normands, to make the despairing Julie happy by a display of what menaces and perils he causelessly incurred on her account, to expostulate with her in mock seriousness on the danger of such charms, and to ask her advice as to what conduct he was to pursue. Poor Julie was amazed, confused, delighted, knew not what to say, but deprecated a duel—had the highest esteem for Mon-

sieur Root, but hoped he would not expose his own life, as well as that of another, for nothing. She was confusedly happy, and would have been rendered completely so, had not that malicious sprite, which never allows good luck to come without alloy, so ordered it, that Florville at the instant came, besought admittance, and was denied.

More hurt and exasperated at this, the angry Lieutenant sought me out, and poured forth at once a torrent of voluble complaints against fortune, me, the world, the English, and womankind.

“What can have crossed you, Florville,” said I, “if you hold to the honourable resolution of last night.”

“I have been deceived, tricked every way, and nothing is left me but revenge. Hath this Root appointed an hour of meeting? And this Count or Baron, I must look to him also.”

“Him too? then you still hanker after the guineas?”

“ If you knew what need I had of them, you would give me credit for self-denial in the abandonment.”

“ What, in the name of wonder, can you, a young soldier, want with the incumbrance of wealth ?”

Florville here related to me a sort of *pendant* to the story of the previous night. That was all love and romance, this all debt and difficulties ; a singular story, be it remarked, for a young Frenchman to tell, prudence, economy, and honour in pecuniary matters being as much the characteristic of the young French, as the very contrary is of the greater part of the young English. However, the gay Florville was an exception, and in some of the dissipations of the metropolis, he had been into some scenes, the consequences of which might mar even his advancement in his profession. Those considerations, together with the unkindness of Julie, had shaken his resolution. And his present fit of jealousy was more against the

gallant St. Aubin, than even against Monsieur Root.

Who should make his appearance at the moment but Monsieur Root himself! And the Lieutenant's amicable conversation with me was immediately turned to an angry expostulation with my friend. Rutledge was all suavity in reply; he had no objection to the hostile meeting, but proposed as a more amicable adjustment, to refer the difference to the decision of the fair Julie. Florville, however, still blustered, being still irresolute. I pressed him, on perceiving this, and accused him of duplicity, as well as heartlessness; and he defended himself by saying, that he would willingly abandon his pretensions to Miss Mordaunt, but such a step would seem forced on him by the Count St. Aubin, whom he would thus seem to dread or to yield to. A previous meeting or explication with him became the necessary preliminary to any step. There was some reason in this. And some consultatory

glances passed immediately betwixt Rutledge and myself.

“Come, Florville,” said I, “you have been frank with me, and we intend to be more than frank with you. Monsieur Root here is no other than the General Count St. Aubin.”

“*Ah bah!* do you think I am a fool—”

“I have de honour to assure you, that I am Alsacien, Sair, and dat my chateau on de Rhine—”

“*Flambé de tous les côtés*, every way tricked—and why, my good Monsieur Le Comte Root St. Aubin, to what purpose all this *moquerie* of me, and *travestissement* of yourself. Think you, I am a fit subject?”

“Monsieur Root, as you call him, Florville,” said I, “is the ancient and accepted lover of Miss Mordaunt, come on purpose to reclaim her from your fascinations.”

“The ancient?—make me sure of that,—the ancient, mark me, not a new, and I am satisfied.”



“ And Mademoiselle Le Normand, is he the ancient lover there too, ha ?”

“ No, i’ faith, a very recent and a very false one.”

“ This is something,” said Florville, taking a satisfactory pinch of snuff. “ And so the Count St. Aubin has become the rival of both Messieurs Florville and Root—it is a vaudeville *parfaite*. But allons, what more ? Tell me thus much—how far has the Count been successful near Miss Sophie ?”

“ Nothing express, the tenderest of reception, the warmest of grasps, every thing that could fan hope, and bid affection live.”

“ The same story exactly I could tell. I wish you joy of her. I give her up. She is *bête*, and coquette, two characters I never met united before—but ye English are all prodigies.”

“ Wit and worth, if misunderstood, what are they but *bêtise* ?” said Rutledge.

“ Well, as you wish, *chacun à son goût*. I will visit Julie, and if—”

“ Nay, no ifs; I promise for her, as for all that has been said. But, Florville, before we part, I have mentioned to my friend here, your friend too, I trust, what you mentioned to me. He is a monied rascal, and might unjewishly convenience you.”

“ Nay, a year would be sufficient for me to repay it.”

“ How much might it be?”

“ It is much.”

“ Nay—is it five hundred louis?”

“ Five hundred francs—more—double the sum.”

“ A thousand francs only,—and a good fellow’s peace at stake for such a sum! My dear fellow, you shall have it in one second.”

The astonishment of poor Florville was as great as his pleasure. With a heart, on which nought no longer weighed to depress its natural buoyancy, he hurried, and found that part

of our assertions, which most concerned him, true.

Rutledge and myself waited the auspicious hour of evening. And then the General Count St. Aubin hastened to visit the Mordaunts. Half an hour's space of the usual conversation ensued, of *la belle France*, and its lovely vineyard; of the Rhine, its castles; Italy, its ruins and olives; in short of all the delights of the Continent; we forgot not to speak of Blois, of Florville's regiment, and Florville himself. And, in truth, Sophia seemed curious to hear respecting him, yet not anxious—there was no agitated nerve, nor checked respiration, attending her questions. It was cold curiosity. Anon the conversation turned to old England, and though not entered upon warmly, still familiar names and old recollections forced proper interest. Nay, the conversation flowed more trippingly upon a theme so long forgotten. How speak of absent home, and not of deaths and marriages, and of such like adventures?

“Did you hear of poor Rutledge’s sudden disappearance from England?” came at last.

“No,” was breathlessly replied.

“Gone for certain, and has not since been heard of at home.”

“What can have become of him?” asked Mrs. Mordaunt. Her daughter had not strength for the question.

I mentioned three probable rendezvous of the missing at that time—Colombia, the North Pole, and the bottom of the sea.

My jest was ill received, and the young lady grew pale. The General Count St. Aubin flew to her relief, but in his hurry unluckily forgot both generalship and countship.

“My dearest Sophia,” was the exclamation, in pure vernacular English too, in which the Rhenish Count called on the fainting maiden.

Sophia opened her eyes, and a shriek instantly came. For bending over her, she beheld the mustachio-less and undisguised Rutledge.

The passionate hysteric, that his supposed fate had nearly produced, was of course suspended, and not without the ire of the lady, who, glad as she was at the recovery of her lover, was still indignant at being so grossly deceived. She stood up with dignity, and spoke some words of resentment and pride. "It was unjustifiable, and wrong in the extreme. She would never forgive it, never." So saying with a dreadful emphasis, she retired.

The next morning Sophia not only granted, but her good sense made her even crave pardon of her lover. Her nationality, her natural feelings, and old, familiar thoughts returned; and as in a little re-union of all friends, Florville and Julie met Rutledge with Sophia, the first allowed that the last was no longer *bête*.

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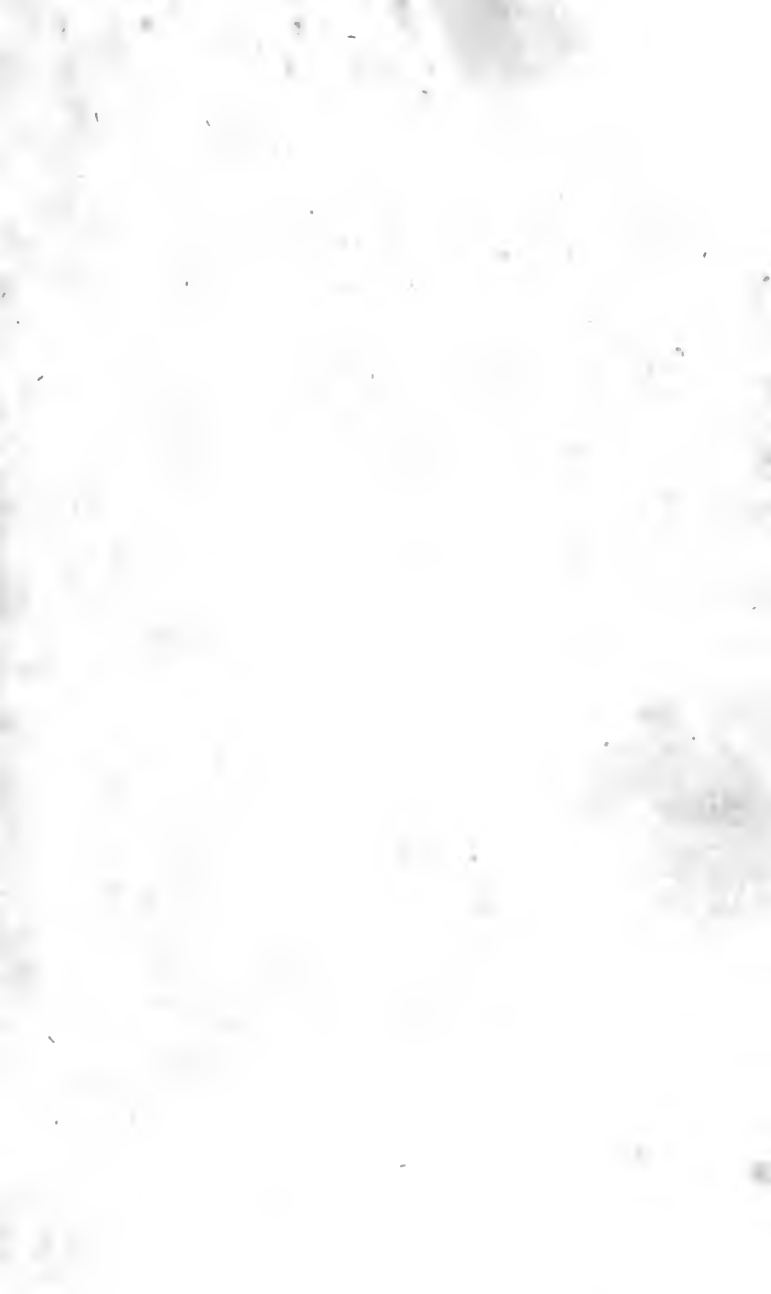
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